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THE NEW REPUBLIC

November 10, 1979

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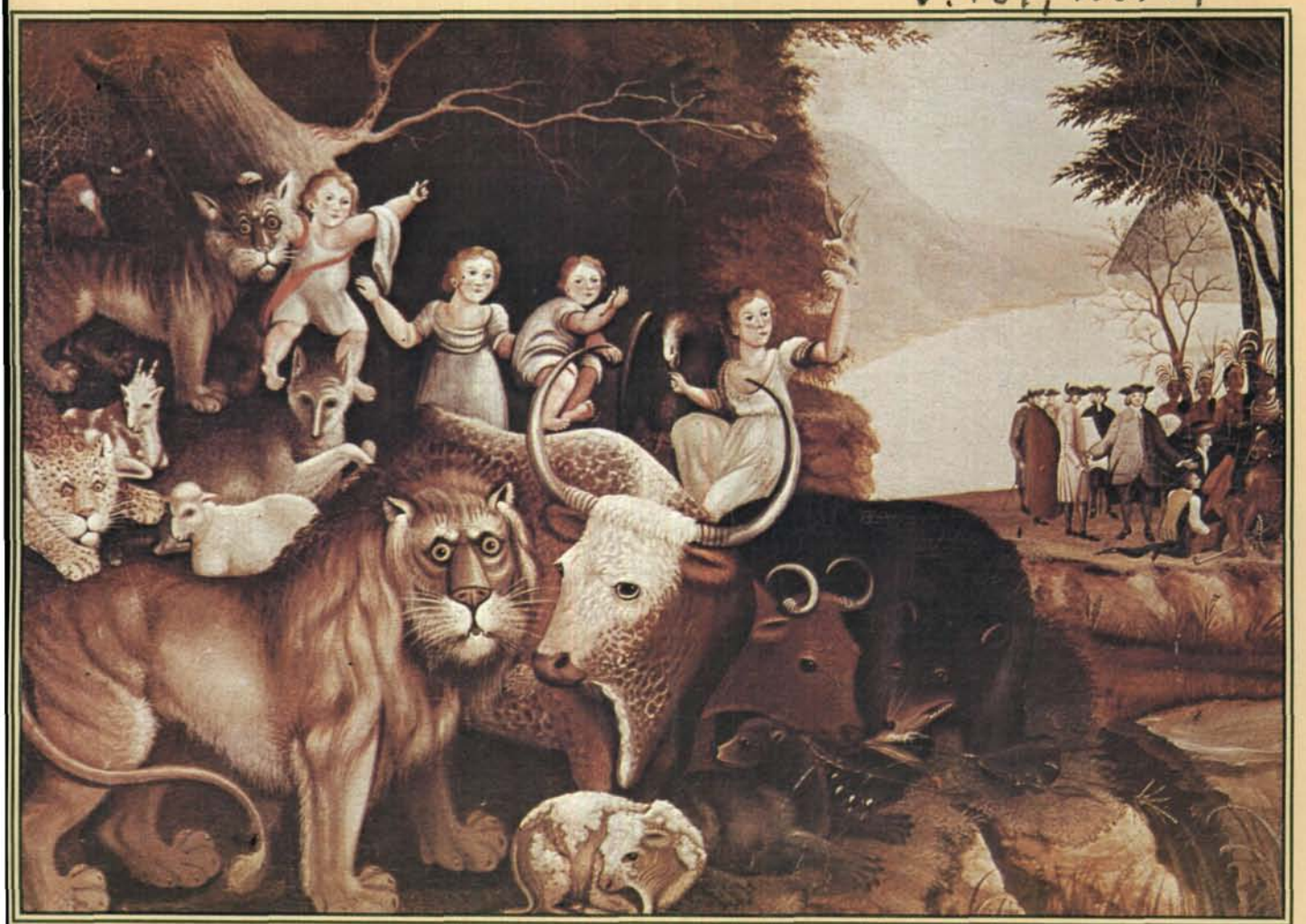

The Utopian Mind

Robert Nisbet

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TRB

from Washington
November 10, 1979

Labor in Transition

The carpet on George Meany's executive suite on the eighth floor of the AFL-CIO office building in Washington is so thick you can bounce on it. There are a couple of conference rooms that look like trysting places for directors of the Chase Manhattan. Not bad for a Bronx plumber who left high school to take up a stillson wrench and whose pronunciation caused anxious stenographers to ask behind their hands what "oily boids" meant. One wall of the Meany office is covered with framed paintings (early- and middle-Meany; the latter, I am sorry to say, becoming abstractionist). On the exit wall is a *New Yorker* cartoon showing a curmudgeon glaring into a shaving mirror and snarling in disappointment: "Yes, I'm crusty; but not so crusty as George Meany."

The opulent Meany suite looks over the gilt steeple of the Episcopal church across at President Carter's White House. A block away is the handsome building of the US Chamber of Commerce from whose elegant top suite Dr. Richard L. Lesher, 46, erstwhile administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and presently Chamber president, also looks across Lafayette Park at the White House. Big Business, Big Labor, Big Government, all in cozy proximity and comprising Washington's eternal triangle. A major change is coming almost immediately.

Ailing George Meany, 85, steps down from his $110,000 job next week (November 15) and technocrat Joseph Lane Kirkland, AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer, present salary $90,000, takes over. It is the Federation's biennial six-day convention with 1000 delegates and as many alternates. It will be a swank affair; Mr. Carter and half the Cabinet will speak, and there will be a lot to talk about. Organized labor is in trouble; it is going downhill. These princes of labor, these feudal barons, are nervous and anxious. Almost certainly things henceforward are going to be dated from the "end of the Meany era."

The basic problem, I think, is trying to run a class struggle in the context of a middle-class society. How can you draw the distinction between "them" and "me" in America when you may become one of the "them" any time? You have a car, a home, a mortgage, and you begin to believe in Proposition 13; you want to reduce the size of government. The statistics are that when Meany took over the presidency of the Federation in 1952, some 34 percent of the non-farm workers were organized; today it's only around 24 percent. That's one in four instead of one in three.

And the troubles are growing. There are fewer factory workers in America and more unskilled workers. (Crafts are easier to organize.) Instead of blue-collar workers there are white collars, and now "pink collars"—waitresses and service trades. It's becoming a service economy. A lot of the top union leaders are smug and elderly; it's the Kremlin geriatric, what Galbraith called "aged, contented, and deeply somnambulant."

Rival philosophies always have contended. Two years short of a century ago Sam Gompers helped form the AFL and there have been only three leaders since: Gompers himself, William Green, and Meany, all three interested in bread and butter, not ideology. Bill Green was so conservative that he denounced the workers' sit-down strikes that organized Detroit. Each man had rivals, men who looked to Europe, who believed in the mystique of the exploited working class—the proletariat. Big Bill Hayward, Victor Berger, Morris Hillquit called Gompers a traitor. Challenging Green were those like Walter Reuther, Norman Thomas, and John L. Lewis, that extraordinary Shakespearean actor (the only man I ever knew who began a sentence, "Methinks"). The CIO quit the AFL in 1935 because of stodgy Green and Meany got it back again 20 years later. Now the momentum of the CIO revolt has run out.

Here are some things labor must look at. Lane Kirkland, standing in for Meany, has worked out a Carter Accord: under it unions will go along with the administration on wage restraint but at a price; will the other labor barons buy it? Will the Federation bolt to Teddy Kennedy? Both Meany and Kirkland are against it, supporting the old Gompers strategy of rewarding friends and punishing enemies. Others want to make the leap; cantankerous Meany himself once called Carter "the most conservative president since Calvin Coolidge." (He's berated most presidents.)

Again, what will labor do about Congress, and about management? One of the worst humiliations labor has suffered in modern times was the failure to get the Labor Law Reform bill through Congress. Carter supported it last year, it passed the House, but for six weeks all the pressure of Meany's men couldn't raise the 60 Senate votes needed to break a filibuster; they could get only 59. The bill wasn't radical. It implemented the Wagner act of 43 years before, tightened laws protecting union organizing, and at all times a Senate majority favored it. But George Meany's aging labor movement lacked the clout, even with a Democratic president and a Democratic Congress.

Meanwhile a conservative anti-union movement has formed. It is well-heeled, highly articulate, and sponsors "right-to-work" advertising. It senses that labor is on the defensive. One thing at stake is the hitherto non-union South and Southwest, where many northern plants are relocating.

Almost alone among world labor movements the AFL-CIO is not ideological, is not dedicated to the class struggle. George Meany is a super-hawk and supported Vietnam past all reason. All his social values, his blue-collar Bronx background, his Roman Catholicism make him anti-communist. Lane Kirkland (who has a foreign service degree and an interest in archaeology, and who helped write speeches for Adlai Stevenson) shares Meany's hardline views but favors SALT II. There is a sense of transition in labor. Douglas Fraser's UAW suddenly is aiding ailing Chrysler and Fraser himself is going to take a place on the board of directors. The economy is worsening. A day may come when management and labor, looking across at the White House from their respective Washington watchtowers, may find greater incentive for cooperation.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

November 10, 1979

No Good News Yet

The president is still not quite three-fourths through his term; 10 months remain before the Democratic convention at Madison Square Garden; a year remains until the election. Yet already Jimmy Carter is running virtually full-time, and damn the business of governing. It's not all his fault, either; the Iowa caucuses are slated for January; those in Minnesota for late February, the same day as the New Hampshire primary. The system, it appears, provides no alternative if an incumbent wants a second term. In the circumstances and without much of a record, as one shrewd Washington observer put it, Mr. Carter has decided to play to his strengths: he was always a better candidate than a chief executive.

Where the president goes, his personal bureaucracy also goes, in advance and after. In recent weeks, reporters tell us, White House corridors have echoed with the emptiness of big offices whose usual occupants were off doing political chores in those stray and fugitive places that dateline important national news, on schedule, every four years: a town-and-gown locale called Ames, for example; that string of small Granite State factory communities, Berlin, Concord, Keene, Manchester. Miami's Collins Avenue, a depressed tourist spot during the last few years, hopped with activity in early October and seemed momentarily transformed as Pennsylvania Avenue South. But the president's greatest asset in battle is not his army of faithful troops, fanning out across the country, cajoling, arguing, convincing. It is, as the president well knows, the federal trough, the greatest persuader of them all.

The press knows it too. And it has been reporting, not as the national scandal that it is, just how deftly the Carter folk have allocated the federal dollar for maximum immediate political impact. Nationally, 275,000 census jobs are about to be doled out. Dade County got its share of other Federal perquisites a while back; others are scrambling; some wait, secure in their awareness of Mr. Carter's need for friends. What's better, municipal and state officeholders are asking, to embrace Carter now or play shy but willing? One high Washington budgeteer told a reporter that New York City was more likely to get Uncle Sam's dollars than New York State: Mayor Koch is thought to be in the Carter camp; Governor Carey in Kennedy's corner. Who knows how many millions were earmarked for Cook County in Carter's seduction of Ms. Jane Byrne before she did the inevitable? Could Chicago have done otherwise but avow the blood loyalties to which many of its Democrats were born and choose Kennedy, its inheritance? (One top Chicago Democrat complained that Carter had discovered Cook County too late: "Jimmy Carter hasn't shown the kind of respect for the 5.5 million people of Cook County that they deserve. He failed to consider us for any possible appointments in his administration.") Florida, which earlier tried and failed to outflank New Hampshire and become the first primary state, has learned best what makes tight federal funds available. It is staging no less than three distinct political spectaculars on the way to the nomination, apparently heeding the instructions of the late James Michael Curley to "vote early and often." Participation in the process is its own reward.

It's bribery, pure and simple. But in Jimmy Carter's sophistication about being so cynically "political," the commentators suddenly have found something to admire. It's remarkable, in fact, how easy it is for the president's fortunes to change, at least in the *feuilletons* of those whose job it is to say he's either up or down. Carter's speechwriter Rick Hertzberg writes a witty speech for the dull boy, and already he's a comer. (But then, what other candidate is obliged by the press to share his credits with his ghosts?) Carter succeeds in getting 500 famous people to come for dinner and everybody says it's a new ball game. Now that Ted Kennedy has just about officially declared and there's

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an accredited contest, the press has an interest in keeping Carter in the fray.

On the augurings, it's not likely to be an edifying campaign. The early competition seems mostly to be for cash. That's why the big news about Kennedy in the last fortnight was not the establishment of a campaign committee headed by his brother-in-law, Steve Smith, but the recruitment to the cause of one Morris Dees. Or as a big city front page headline had it, "Carter's Mr. Money Defects to Ted." Mr. Money is a nice man, a smart man, even an idealistic man. At least that is what one says of any successful businessman who gave his ardor to George McGovern in 1972. But Dees is important now because he is the Democrats' avocational Richard Viguerie. What Viguerie does for private profit on behalf of the freak right, Dees does for liberals solely out of conviction. Which is to say that he's a specialist in spending one million dollars in the mails to raise one million dollars through the mails so that the candidate can get another one million dollars from the Federal Elections Commission—the only million, in this wasteful process, he'll be able to spend.

The other organized draws on the matching-fund accounts of the FEC are gate receipts from rock concerts. Why not give the nomination to the candidate who persuades the most popular rock group? Convince the Grateful Dead and you've got the party's nod. Realistically the most decisive sale a candidate may have to make is selling himself to some gold-platter music idols. Carter presumably has his "country and western" types already staked out; California's governor Jerry Brown has some special cachet with at least one top star, probably others; and there'll be no shortage for Kennedy.

He'll tell them about leadership, Carter's faulty leadership, his own sterling brand. The Senate rebukes Carter every day; Kennedy's Democratic senatorial colleagues ousted him from his post as majority whip. Kennedy lays a bum, if irresistible, rap on Carter in blaming him for inflation and the fuel crisis. Though Kennedy has long been out front on refugee issues, it's mostly showboating to accuse the president of moral dereliction on aid to Cambodia. Where do the two men really differ? A health plan does not a campaign make. Philosophical differences, such as they are, likely will be muted. The enthusiasm will come from the atmospherics, and so will the great expectations. As of now, Ted has it hands down on that score. Remember "the best and the brightest." He wins hands down on that clichéd "good advisers, good staff" count also. What many people will be left thinking is that Kennedy would succeed with Carter's policies. What kind of an enticement to voters is that? All the same, Kennedy seems to embody the latent progressive energy of the Democratic party. That is not simply an asset in a political campaign but a strength that can move people to imagination and action.

Then there's Jerry Brown, the wild card in the Democratic deck. The entire *New Republic* readership, we expect, winces simultaneously at the mention of his name. But Brown right now is just marginal enough to be able—no, to be obliged—to raise some ignored issues. There's a certain *déjà vu* about Brown: he stirs memories of another philosophically-inclined Catholic self-consciously outside "conventional politics." Brown is the only one talking seriously about productivity in America; it's the decline in productivity that compounds the seriousness of inflation. For whatever it's worth, and we're not sure what it is, he's clear on nuclear power: against. He's given thought to the US relationship with our southern neighbors, Mexico in particular. How, he asks, would we respond to turmoil in Mexico? to a Marxist or Fidelista government there? Can we do something now to prevent that? What does it mean to have a large trans-Mexican subculture in our country? Challenging questions. Intriguing questions. But there's much that rankles: he is too casual in his opposition to busing, for example; and there's that mischievous constitutional amendment on the balanced budget. No, "mischievous" is too tepid a word.

It's too early in the campaign, very early. We'd be happier if it hadn't started yet. Maybe we're more downhearted than we need be. We are eager to be so proven.

White House Watch

Feeling Good (II)

For a reporter who wants his presidents to succeed, it's more fun to be around the White House when the incumbent and his people think they are doing well than when they think or know they are doing badly. At this writing on October 31, it's more fun to be around the Carter White House than it was a few weeks ago. A mid-level assistant with sensitive antennae out above, around, and below him recalled the doldrums of the summer and early fall and said, speaking particularly of the legislative prospects in Congress then and now: "Maybe it's just what happens in summer. But I think everybody around here is feeling pretty good now."

This is a report, drawn almost entirely from and perhaps distorted by White House talk, on why people there are feeling pretty good and say the President is, too. The obvious starting point is with Alonzo McDonald, the President's and staff chief Hamilton Jordan's efficiency man, and the changes in structure and process that he has brought about and overseen since he moved to the White House from the President's international trade office in September. The improvements continue and they are unanimously praised. But there are deeper reasons for the discernible upbeat in attitude and performance. A senior assistant whose perceptions are among the best available to

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Correspondence

Festering views of the pope

To the editors:

I should write these words on black-bordered paper, since they are words of sympathy for Thomas Geoghegan. From his snide, sarcastic, derisive report of Pope John Paul's Chicago visit ("Popestock in Chicago," *TNR*, October 20) emerges a picture of a bitter man, threatened by the specter of values which he cannot understand, much less accept, and who therefore has taken this occasion to air his festering views. True, there are many who have areas of disagreement with John Paul, but the true intellectuals, the true humanitarians, air their disagreements honestly and without contempt or ridicule, recognizing that they are striving together for the ultimate good of all humanity.

Betty J. Costabile
Racine, Wisconsin

P. S. I have checked with one of the 600 priests who distributed communion at the Grant Park mass. The priests were not "enlisting all available hands to help pass out communion. . . ." Due to the large numbers, they did at times ask persons in front rows to pass the host back to others.

Howitzer-loads of abuse

To the editors:

You people must be preternaturally sensitive political forward observers if Stephen Chapman ("Baby Face," *TNR*, October 20) had to call down howitzer-loads of abuse just to "get" that poor junior senator from South Dakota. Larry Pressler may not be *TNR*'s cup of tea (or mine), but he hardly merits nuclear obliteration for parlaying the presidency of the student body at the University of South Dakota into a Senate seat. Methinks Chapman's real villain is Jimmy Carter, another ambitious provincial who might have been zapped early. Yet one need admire neither Carter nor Pressler to reject out-and-out overkill. Back in Sioux Falls or Spearfish, Pressler can make justified political capital out of such overblown Chapmanian sarcasms as "lovably tousled brown hair." *TNR* should save its major ironic barrages for John Connally, who is target enough to deserve them.

Charles W. Bassett, Director
Colby College
Waterville, Maine

P.S. I guess you showed more moxie by being mean to the pope.

Disheartening statements

To the editors:

There are disturbing and disheartening statements in the Washington Diarist of the October 6 issue concerning the visits of various black Americans to the Middle East, especially in reference to the current interest in the Palestinians by these black leaders.

Referring to Walter Fauntroy's and Joseph Lowery's trip, M.P. says, "This leadership is for rent; it barely pretends otherwise." Referring to Andrew Young, M.P. says, "Have I asked Young to do penance for Idi Amin. . .?" While there are grounds for discussing the role of anti-Semitism as a contributing factor in the sympathy some Americans express for the Palestinians, it is as unfair to assume that the blacks who favor the political program of the PLO are anti-Semitic as it would be to assume that because M.P. says Andrew Young has "an ego as big as the Ritz" that he is anti-black.

Joe Neal
Fayetteville, Arkansas

Senate race

To the editors:

Not knowing who or what Rene Becker used as a source in drawing the conclusions that "the moderate Republican possibilities appear to have a slight edge" in the race to replace Adlai E. Stevenson III in the US Senate (sidebar to "A Republican Senate?," *TNR*, October 13), I do not wish to challenge the author directly. However, I believe that most Illinois residents even remotely familiar with the politics of their state would offer the opinion that a Democrat, Secretary of State Alan Dixon, has a decided lead in the contest. Dixon is Illinois's top vote-getter and has demonstrated his strength as a Democratic winner in otherwise Republican elections. His opponent in November more than likely will be Attorney General William Scott, also a proven vote-getter, who recently has suffered complications due to illness and indictment.

John A. Ostenburg
Park Forest, Illinois

Freedom versus totalitarianism

To the editors:

While Ronald Steel's piece "The War Europe Lost" (*TNR*, October 6) made several cogent points, I cannot agree with the author that World War II was "essentially a dynastic conflict." To be sure, nationalism was a key factor in the cause of the war. But the stakes involved were higher than the settling of the German question. World War II *was* as much about freedom versus totalitarianism as it was about the balance of power in Europe.

Joseph S. Kennedy
Media, Pennsylvania

P.S. World War I was *not* fought entirely in Europe. There were fronts in the Middle East, East Africa, and the North Atlantic.

The psychiatrist's couch

To the editors:

Although not entirely surprising, it was nevertheless disappointing to find a psychiatrist promulgating the idea that "the psychologized view of the world carries with it a pernicious reductionism that debases and deforms moral discourse ("The Expanding Shrink," *TNR*, September 22). Charles Krauthammer recognizes the importance of unconscious phenomena, but he believes that it is "inappropriate" and "irrelevant" to apply our knowledge of such phenomena beyond the purlieus of the psychiatrist's couch.

What I hear is a frantic effort to hold onto an antiquated morality, a morality that will not accept the sometimes chilling fact that things are not always what they seem to be, that more often than not we know not what we do. White hat-black hat morality has to die. Civilization, still in its infancy, must transcend its fixation with the "good-bad" position if it is to develop further, just as the infant must recognize that the "good mother" who meets its needs, and the "bad mother," the one who is not there when it cries for her, is one and the

(continued on page 39)

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Carter and to journalists whom he trusts said:

> *Sure, there's an upbeat atmosphere around here. But it's not all organizational. The big thing that's happening around here is a perceptible coming of people together, getting ready for a fight. People here don't have any more time for excluding other folks from what's happening. There is more sense of a necessity for all of us to work together and put our best foot forward.*

In brief—translating the above remark—the best thing that's happened to the Carter White House operation and related political operations is Senator Edward M. Kennedy. The Carter people expected for months to scare him out of going for nomination and election in 1980. They relied on open and covert threats varying from talk of dividing the Democratic party to reminders of personal vulnerabilities. He didn't scare and he's got them constructively scared. The chief staff pols among them are saying with a great show of confidence, "we are going to beat the hell out of Senator Kennedy," and they seem to believe it. This reporter is betting and hoping that they are right. Now back to what's happening at the White House.

One of the happenings is that the President or anyhow his managers are under pressure to lift the ceilings that he promised in his 1975-76 campaign to impose and after his accession did impose upon White House staff levels. As Carter must have learned when he was governor of Georgia and made big play of the same stuff, such ceilings and the supporting figures are inherently misleading. In mid-1977 he stuck himself with a maximum of 351 bodies on his immediate White House Office staff. He put people, including his wife Rosalynn with her modest personal staff, on notice that he would tolerate the fewest possible evasions in the forms of detailees from government agencies who stay on their payrolls, part-time employees, and consultants. His public calls for citizen communication with him, the pre-1980 campaign increase in the numbers of officials, politicians, group leaders of all sorts brought to the White House for briefings by Carter and others on everything from energy legislation to SALT and hospital cost containment, not to mention general support for him and all his policies, require staff preparation and multiply demands on staff time and energies.

The President's assistants and administrators know this. Five assistants in particular—Jack Watson, now the unannounced overseer of presidential appointments as well as Cabinet secretary and assistant for city-county-state governmental relationships; Sarah Weddington, senior staff organizer of general political support; Anne Wexler, senior staff organizer of support for specific Carter programs; staff chief Hamilton Jordan and his deputy, Alonzo McDonald, know all this. If Carter doesn't know it in general terms, he should not be President. Has anybody put the need to him in specific terms—that, for instance, Weddington and Wexler maintain that they simply can't d all they are supposed to do in this pre-1980 phase and i 1980 without more help? Nobody has, so far as thi reporter can determine. Nobody dares.

Wringing current, specific staff levels out of th beleaguered managers isn't easy. The figures don't se me weeping for the burdened senior staffers ($59,08 per year at tops) but some of them have a good case fo more help. The President's White House Offic (excluding the much larger Executive Office of th President) has 347 permanent employees; 27 detailee from other agencies; 22 temporary (up to thre months) employees; three consultants (up to $150-plu per day). Because they are separately established b law, Stuart Eizenstat's Domestic Policy Staff an Zbigniew Brzezinski's National Security Council staf are outside the White House Office and its totals. The DPS has 55 people (48 permanent; two temps; five detailees). Carter has required Brzezinski to kee NSC's staff total under 100. It varies between 97 and a maximum of 99. It currently has 64 permanent employees, 29 detailees, and six part-time or temporary employees, putting NSC at the maximum permissible 99. Brzezinski and his staff apart—I somehow find it impossible to groan for that crew—the hope is that Carter will allow the detailing of enough more people from other agencies to relieve the immediate pressures. By law, NSC excepted, the White House can use detailees at the parent agencies' expense for no more than six months. NSC reimburses parent agencies but gets a lot of unreimbursed help in one way or another.

A reason for the initially mentioned good feeling is a sense that the White House people are doing better and are going to get more help to do it still better. Three other reasons will be noted briefly. Carter legislation and proposals on energy, the strategic arms limitation treaty, and hospital costs containment—the President's three topmost priorities—are doing far better in Congress at the turn of October and November than anyone thought in mid-summer they could be doing. The contests are still close, but who at the end of October writes the prospects off as many were doing not long ago? Beyond that, three internal organization developments contribute to the sense of White House well-being.

The longer period for preparing major Carter speeches and the broadened in-house and outside participation in same that Alonzo McDonald organized are applauded within the Carter senior staff to a greater extent than this reporter knew when he noted the change in our last issue. Two internal organizational changes contribute more concretely to a sense of functional improvement. A brief account of them calls for a minor caution. A current aim of topside White House talk is to justify Carter's July changes in his Cabinet, in terms of end effect, without (in most instances) justifying the horribly inept way in which the changes were accomplished.

The new secretary of the treasury, William Miller, is

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said to have enormously improved the workings of the important Economic Policy Group. He is believably said to have brought to it a quality of guidance, orderly process, effective decision that his predecessor, Michael Blumenthal, never achieved. That reflects on Blumenthal, who is beginning to say in reply that the Carter people in his time never knew what they were doing in the economics field. The new secretary of energy, Charles Duncan, was invited by Carter's senior domestic policy adviser, Stuart Eizenstat, and Carter's budget director, James McIntyre, to take over and back to the Department of Energy the policy guidance that Duncan's predecessor, James Schlesinger, never seemed at the White House to provide. Eizenstat assumed the responsibility and exercised it at daily White House meetings before Schlesinger left and Duncan arrived. Duncan now exercises it at meetings at his department, in his conference room. Eizenstat attends and approves.

Here's a final footnote on the same line. The EPG's central core—Miller, Eizenstat, Alfred Kahn, chief economist Charles Schultze, McIntyre, the secretaries of commerce and labor lately—had customarily met in the Roosevelt conference room at the White House. Brzezinski sends a deputy. One afternoon an unscheduled White House senior staff meeting preempted the room and the EPG people had to traipse over to McIntyre country in the adjoining Old Executive Office Building. Miller said, never again. Now the EPG executive committee, as Miller styles it, meets twice a week instead of the previous once a week at the Treasury, in *his* conference room.

It's the sort of thing that makes Carter's people think that things are going better. Mighty late, but better.

John Osborne

On the Hill

Undemocratic Nanny

The Federal Trade Commission is an easy agency to love—or to hate. Once weak and obscure, it has recently become one of the most aggressive agencies in Washington. With the new aggressiveness has come controversy. Among consumer organizations, the FTC stands as a shining example of how bold regulation can force the marketplace to serve the needs of the average American. To businessmen, however, the agency is a haven of overzealous bureaucrats harassing the honest entrepreneur and protecting the consumer from himself.

Both caricatures have some truth in them. In the agency's favor, consider the acrimonious fight over eyeglass advertising. An FTC investigation had found that in states where advertising of prices is allowed, prices are generally lower. Reasoning that consumers had a lot to gain from better information, the FTC struck down the state laws restricting ads. The agency drew heavy fire from the American Medical Association and the American Optometric Association, but consumers clearly benefited from this stimulus to competition. Another FTC proposal would require mobile home manufacturers to live up to the terms of their warranties—hardly a radical proposal, but a bitterly unpopular one in the industry.

But the FTC's critics have no shortage of ammunition. Last year, for example, the agency's staff recommended that television advertising aimed at children be much more closely regulated or even banned completely (the commissioners, who have the final say, haven't decided yet what to do). The proposal took a rather cavalier view of both the First Amendment and the responsibility of parents for their children, and made the FTC a deserved object of popular scorn across the country (the *Washington Post* derided it as our "national nanny"). Sometimes the agency does things that look more silly than dangerous—like questioning the United States' Golf Association's ban on a new adjustable golf club in tournament play as part of its investigation into how to regulate the voluntary standards industry.

These days the agency's bad image appears to overshadow its good one, and Congress is considering a variety of measures to bring the FTC to heel. Several amendments have been introduced to kill specific rules (for such industries as funeral homes, hearing aids, and used cars). Another would cut off funds for the FTC's "intervenor" program, which provides money to groups which otherwise couldn't afford to participate in FTC hearings on proposed rules, but which critics say has been used almost exclusively to sponsor people who agree with the agency. The biggest threat to the agency, however, is a proposal to give Congress the power to veto any FTC rule within 90 days after it is issued. The House has approved such a restriction on the FTC before, and it is almost certain to do so again this year. The real fight will come in the Senate, where Republican Harrison Schmitt has already found 35 cosponsors for his congressional veto amendment. He hasn't been able to get it approved by the Senate Commerce Committee, however, so Schmitt's proposal most likely will be offered as a floor amendment to the FTC authorization bill this week or next. Both sides say the vote will be very close.

As often happens in Washington, the trees in this controversy have served mainly to obscure the forest. Instead of giving careful consideration to the fundamental issue raised by the legislative veto, Washington's assorted lobby groups have lined up in their usual places—Chamber of Commerce and National Association of Manufacturers over here, Consumer Federation of America and Ralph Nader over there. What both sides are worrying about is the

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issue on which there is, understandably, much disagreement: is the FTC doing a good job? What they are ignoring is the question on which everyone should agree: should the FTC—and the bureaucracy in general—be more accountable to the public?

Of course it should. Most Americans don't realize how broad the FTC's power is. The agency used to carry out its mandate to stop unfair or deceptive practices by suing individual companies for their transgressions, but since the passage of the Magnuson-Moss Act in 1975 it has had the power to issue rules regulating entire industries. The rules issued by the FTC have all the force of law—and violation of some of them can bring heavy fines and even jail terms. Sometimes the FTC has used this new authority prudently, sometimes not—but authority delegated is authority that can be abused. Right now Congress has only the crudest means to prevent the agency from getting into matters it shouldn't get into—namely the ability to cut off funds for those projects.

The FTC's defenders say this club is enough to keep the agency in line. But why should Congress be forced to use a clumsy means of directing the FTC if a defter one can be devised? A congressional veto would serve two useful purposes. First it would force the FTC to pay greater attention to sentiment in Congress. It is hard to believe, for instance, that the agency's staff would have suggested banning all children's advertising if it had had the sword of a legislative veto hanging over its head. Second, of course, it would give Congress a quick, neat way of overruling bad decisions by the FTC. Probably Congress wouldn't have to exercise this power very often: it certainly doesn't have the time and resources to investigate every minor rule issued by the agency. The threat of a veto alone should be enough to restrain excessive zealotry at the FTC.

Giving Congress more direct responsibility for what the bureaucracy does has its dangers, of course. The principal one is that special interests may be able to manipulate Congress to kill FTC rules they don't like. No doubt they may, but that risk goes with democracy. Everyone has a voice, even funeral directors and mobile home manufacturers, and they're free to raise it when their interests are threatened. But so are consumer organizations and ordinary citizens, providing what is admittedly an imperfect balance. The insistence by consumer groups that Congress shouldn't be trusted with this authority—which, after all, it delegated in the first place—rests on an ultimate distrust of democracy and faith (unsupported by the record of most regulatory agencies) that unelected lawyers are more likely than elected representatives to make good policy. The premise on which the legislative veto rests, by contrast, is merely that the government should depend on the consent of the governed. Congress may not always exercise a veto wisely, but the verdict on that will fall to the voters—which is just as it should be.

Stephen Chapman

Media blitz in the Bayou.

Louisiana Story

Money doesn't always corrupt politics. Sometimes it just makes politics insipid and irrelevant. Fortified with windfall campaign contributions, six major candidates for governor of Louisiana spent about $18 million for an October 27 primary. That winnowed the field to two finalists, a conservative Republican congressman named David Treen and either Democrat James Fitzmorris, the nondescript lieutenant governor since 1972, or Louis Lambert, the chairman of the state Public Service Commission. Fitzmorris and Lambert finished in a virtual dead heat for the second spot. Another three to four million dollars will be disbursed before the runoff on December 8. It is the most expensive non-presidential race ever, and for voters it is one of the most meaningless.

In Louisiana politics used to be riveting. From the days of Huey Long, politicians divided along ideological and class lines. Conservative reformers denounced the corruption of populists like Long. Populists assailed the corporations, utilities, and fatcats. They also brought an appealing roughhouse quality to politics.

But that was before the days of campaign packaging. A generation later, the self-styled populist candidate for governor is Lambert. Breathtakingly different from Earl Long, Lambert is immaculate in appearance, with sculptured hair and nothing of the crazed look that tinged Long's eyes. In running the state regulatory panel, the traditional springboard to the governorship, he acquired a reputation for combating utility rate increases. But this did not impede the lavish financing of his campaign, which is replete with bank loans and corporate contributions.

Two weeks before the primary, Lambert reported raising and spending about $2.9 million. Counting in-kind contributions and a flurry of television advertising in the final days, his tab probably rose to nearly four million dollars. Lambert was the biggest spender in the campaign, and his roster of donors did not read like a Populist Hall of Fame. He received loans of $50,000 from City National Bank of Baton Rouge, the Bank of Dixie in Lake Providence, Raceland Bank and Trust, and the Honey Island Gravel Company, among others. Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas General Inc. gave $25,000 and Timco Casing Inc., $10,000.

The money permitted Lambert to sign up some of the nation's top political consultants. First came Jim Carvin, a New Orleans media specialist who helped catapult Edwin Edwards to the governorship in 1971. Carvin dispatched Lambert to Wall Street for a commercial which depicted the candidate as a crusader against utility investors, and to Switzerland for another showing Lambert's doubts about nuclear energy. The globe-trotting commercials flopped, stirring more complaints than praise. Opinion surveys for the

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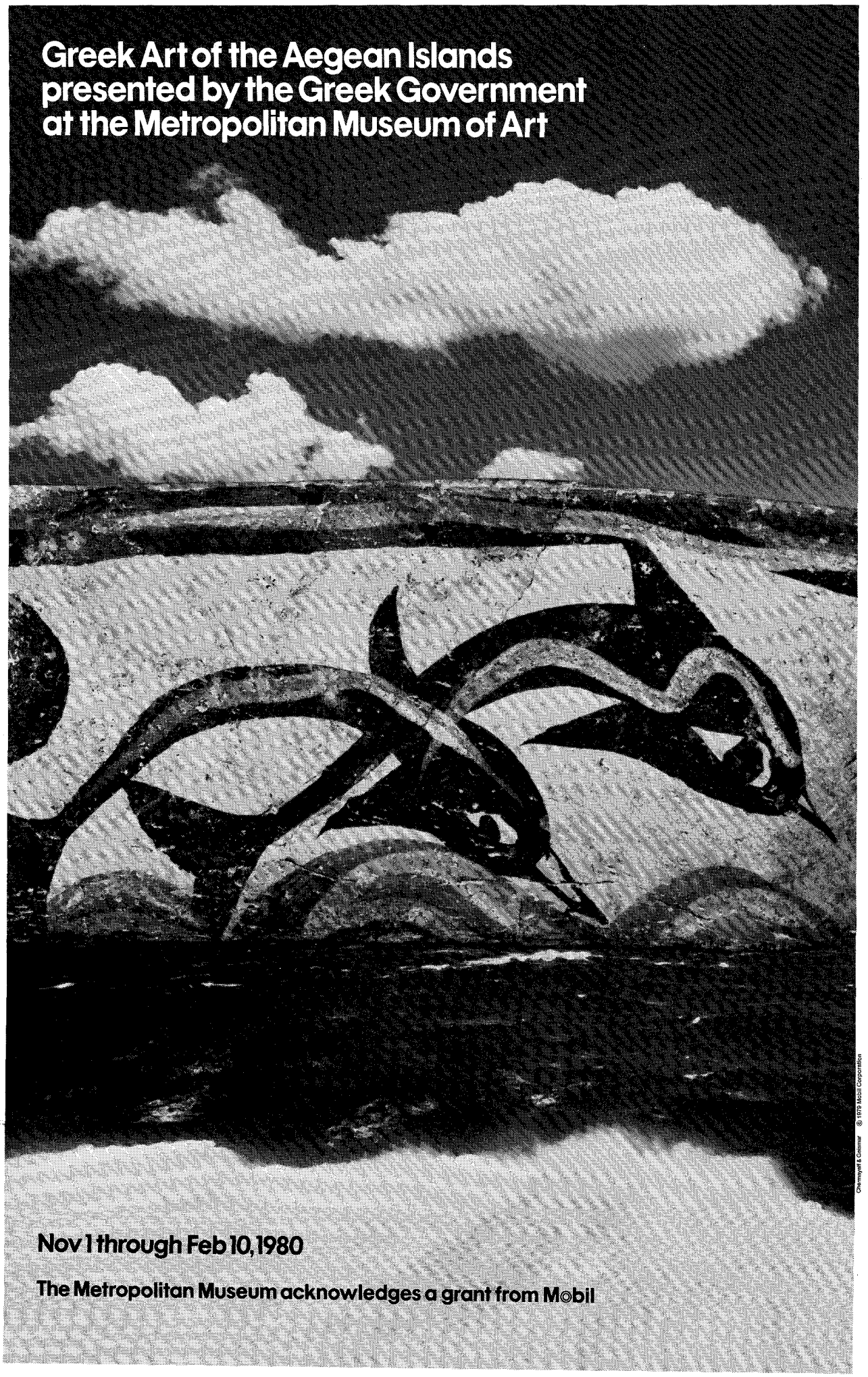

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campaign by Washington pollster William Hamilton showed Lambert still languishing behind the leaders.

Desperate but not impoverished, Lambert turned to Robert Squier, a Washington media expert who has a deft touch with southern politicians. Squier changed everything. He gave Lambert a new slogan that played up state chauvinism ("Louisiana First. Louis Lambert for Louisiana.") and a new set of commercials designed to identify Lambert with farmers, consumers, and teachers. Lambert joined the other candidates in vowing to hoard as much oil and gas in Louisiana as needed to meet the comfort of its citizens, regardless of the energy plight in other states.

Meanwhile, Matt Reese, the New York operative who made his name in the Kennedy presidential campaign in 1960, installed a mammoth phone bank operation. His company was paid almost $300,000 for its services by mid-October. All the effort and expenditure seemed to be worthwhile, though, as Lambert crept up in the polls.

The Lambert campaign was in no way extraordinary in the governor's race. Several candidates spent nearly as much. The free flow of money, some of it from oil and natural gas interests, created a striking phenomenon. Each candidate had the funds to operate on his own, unleashed from the necessity of debating issues with other candidates or even acknowledging their presence. Each hired his own consultants and image-builders, and the state was visited by a plague of organizers, filmmakers, media experts, and pollsters.

The victim of all this media cacophony was serious treatment of significant issues like taxes and education. Louisiana ranks 42nd in per capita income , for example, but no one offered a plan for upgrading the economy to lure better-paying industries into the state. Without issues, the campaign swiftly deteriorated into a political reporter's dream: style over substance, all medium and no message.

A flap over corruption would have enlivened the campaign, but none of the candidates wore a public taint. With both corruption and issues missing, the biggest story was the precipitous departure of David Garth, glowingly described by the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* as the "Number One political consultant in the United States," from the Mouton campaign. Garth, who is famous for his commercials for New York governor Hugh Carey and Mayor Ed Koch of New York City, couldn't get along with Charles Roemer, Mouton's campaign manager. The feud was "Nothing that a gun couldn't solve," said Mouton. Roemer disliked Garth's commercials, which showed Mouton boasting of his legislative achievements and which failed to lift him from his bottom-dwelling position.

Approaching the Garth story in prominence was the Edwin Edwards endorsement furor. Edwards, enormously popular, must step down after two terms. The question is, who does he favor as his successor? Fitzmorris presented a commercial in which Edwards extols him. "It insinuates that Edwards has endorsed Jimmy, but he really hasn't," conceded General Karl Davis, the Fitzmorris campaign's field director. Henry came up with a commercial that revealed Edwards's opinion of Henry as Louisiana's greatest House speaker. Not to be outdone, Lambert featured endorsements by Edwards's mother and brother in *his* commercials.

So it went, month after month. The campaign already had a built-in distortion. Republicans and Democrats run in the same primary, with the top two finishers, whatever their party, moving to the runoff. The idea behind this was to knock off any Republican challenger early, in the primary phase. But Treen, who gives the Republicans their best shot at winning the governorship since Reconstruction, escaped by piling up campaign funds and beginning television advertising in March. The Democrats followed soon with commercials of their own, though the primary was six months away. By early summer, the advertising had been turned upside down: there were commercials about the commercials. Henry presented snippets of the other ads and made fun of them. But Mouton's commercial went further—went to the essence of the Louisiana media debauch. It showed a cow chewing its cud and muttering the slogans of Treen, Fitzmorris, Lambert, Hardy, and Henry. "Tired of all the bull?" the cow asked.

Fred Barnes

Fred Barnes is a reporter for the *Baltimore Sun*.

Khomeini: the god that failed.

Iran's Shaky Theocracy

The news that the shah of Iran is seriously ill with lymphatic cancer has a particular resonance for anyone who witnessed the fervid crowds that shouted for his death last fall and winter, when even the White House was beginning to recognize the reality of the revolution in Iran. "Mar barg shah!" (Death to the shah!) was not just a curse, but an incantation.

To shout "Mar barg shah!" from a rooftop and have the stars continue in their normal courses, and then to hear it echoed across the street, and then across the neighborhood, until the whole city seemed to rock with the noise—this, in a society enamored of martyrdom, was a fortifying tonic. The walls of Jericho had to fall, and in due course they did.

The shah was a man in a hurry. Having been put on his throne by one colonial power and restored to it by another, he was obsessed with building a grand legacy ("the West Germany of the Middle East") for his son.

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But he moved so quickly and so arbitrarily that he managed to offend every major segment of the society, until even the kept middle class averted its face. He reaped Ruhollah Mussawi al-Khomeini.

It is perhaps indelicate to say so, but whether the shah now lives or dies is absolutely irrelevant to the future of his country and its ongoing revolution. His expulsion was irrevocable; even the most devoted royalist understood that much. Still, given good medical care, the shah may have the satisfaction of seeing the fall of Khomeini.

For Khomeini, too, is a man in a hurry. Having waited through 16 years of exile, he is now, at 79, able to work only four or five hours a day, with cataracts clouding those extraordinary eyes. He, too, has a vision for Iran, as a Platonic Republic with a grand ayatollah as philosopher-king, but he is finding Iranian reality no more tractable than did the shah. He expresses his frustrations in dark mutterings about unholy conspiracies, while the country goes to hell all around him.

His support is still formidable. To the poor and the devout—most of Iran—Khomeini is God's answer to the despotism and spiritual wasteland of the shah; his vengeance, God's vengeance; his government, however haphazard, at least both moral and purely Iranian, a sharp contrast to the shah's peculiar union of Western self-interest with a spurious royalism.

The Western image of Khomeini as a bloodthirsty old fanatic, the worst sort of God-crazed autocrat, is parroted only by the rich and the left, and by no means all of them. To the poor he is the father of the revolution, a holy man, God's agent. In his name, they stood before the shah's tanks and automatic weapons, daring them to roll or to fire, and died when they did. But as fighters in a holy war, they are believed to have gone directly to heaven, and the cemetery outside Tehran where most are buried was Khomeini's first stop when he returned from exile. In his name, their deaths were sanctified, and in his name, the poor would be willing to march again.

It is for them he claims to have made the revolution, for the *mustazafeen*, the disinherited, the "poor who lack shoes," in the words of Minister Mehdi Bazargan. It is for them that Khomeini has scourged the rich, chastized uppity women, and stirred up sectarian hatred against Iran's Sunnis, the Arabs of Khuzistan, and the Kurds. It is for them that he has expropriated all the undeveloped land in Tehran, as well as the huge American complex in Isfahan. And it is for them that the government has decreed that no one can be fired, and at least one billion dollars has been set aside for the dole. Nearly all medium- and large-sized businesses have been nationalized, ostensibly for reasons of ideology and theology, but mostly because they would otherwise close, throwing many more *mustazafeen* out of work.

But as always with Khomeini, it is difficult to distinguish the tactical from the religious—a confusion the government must maintain. The aim always is to succor the poor (and satisfy their desire for vengeance) with the promise of heaven; it is a new sort of class war, a theological one—the enemies of the poor are also seen to be the enemies of God.

Khomeini has stepped into the Persian tradition of charismatic kingship, which the shah and his father tried so pathetically to manipulate. Persian rulers have always sought to appear God-like; Khomeini is judged to be. Thus he has been given (has arrogated) the title of "imam," which in Shia Islam carries with it more than a touch of the divine.

But whereas Persian rulers have reached for divinity to unify a patchwork country that is now less than half purely Iranian, Khomeini has used his status to damn, rather than to absolve. Most groups within the society have not chosen opposition so much as they have been, one by one, excommunicated and cast out.

In the new Iranian cosmology, the "devil shah," to be sure, has pride of place, together with all the *taghoutis*, the collaborators and partisans of the old regime. The term, from the Koran, is for a divinity symbolizing the devil; only since the revolution has it been given a political cast. The Westernized classes are rather proud of the distinction, at least among themselves, and although they are still careful to leave their German sedans at home and drive a servant's car, they are less afraid for their lives.

But the problem is that the epithet *taghouti* has become all-inclusive, and it is no small thing to be a devil in a theocracy. Khomeini's grand illusion—and his greatest mistake—has been to see the revolution as purely pro-Islam rather than purely anti-shah, with a significant but by no means dominant religious element. The result has been that Khomeini has been left with no secular ally of any significance—except the *mustazafeen*. And they have been important to Iranian politics only as cannon fodder.

As for the old classes in the anti-shah coalition—from the middle class outraged by the lack of basic political freedoms to the *bazaaris* put off by new ways of doing business—they have all been declared *taghoutis*. The left? Of course, *taghoutis*. The secular democrats—*taghoutis*. No matter how good their anti-shah credentials, they hanker after false gods like democracy and freedom of the press, heresies that presuppose that all governments, even Islamic theocracies, can go wrong and might require public criticism or correction.

Educated women, who marched alongside the men—also *taghoutis*. Their dress, their behavior, their desire for independence and equality, for legal protection against male whim—all questionable. Western fallacies, all of them: decadent and sexually threatening.

But the theological proscriptions play on old and deeply felt antagonisms among the *mustazafeen*. The middle class is resented for its money and its airs, educated women for their uppityness, freedom, and big-city morality.

If one of the major causes of the revolution was in

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social disruption brought by modernization, it should be no surprise that the revolution has been followed by political—and social—reaction. The modern world is judged an aberration; society is fundamentally static; the moral decadence of democracy must be countered with modesty and decorum in women, justice that is quick and simple and not subject to endless appeal, "a responsible" press and intelligentsia, sexual orthodoxy, and a rein on both the God of Mammon and the God of Marx.

It is a simple vision, not without its attractions, but it fits poorly with the aspirations and attitudes of huge numbers of Iranians. It is most attractive to the *mustazafeen*—those whom the modern world has hurt or passed by. They are Khomeini's foot soldiers; their lives and deaths signify. They have made their mark by their sacrifice, by what they prefer to believe is their martyrdom. For them it is a vital illusion, and for Khomeini as well.

For as the winds of counterrevolution begin to swirl through Iran, the one great inhibition to a coup—even as demoralized and disorganized as the army obviously is—still lies in the supposition that the *mustazafeen* would once again cast itself as a human wave against tanks and guns.

It is a supposition that is true today, and will be true tomorrow—but for how much longer can it be true? It is a supposition dependent in great part upon Khomeini's special status as revolutionary, priest, and politician. Can it outlast him, be passed on? He is hardly immortal, and he is not without rivals, even within the church.

A brittle fanaticism has replaced a grandiose dictatorship, but the revolution still has a long course to run. The religious phase is drawing to a close even as it is becoming formalized. Khomeini will get his Islamic Republic by Christmas, perhaps, and he will get it without having to manipulate the vote.

But it is bound not to live very long, or very well. Khomeini has built his church upon the *mustazafeen*, who are capable of forestalling violent change, but totally incapable of running the country, even with the guidance of all those bright and ambitious young mullahs, and the cushion of all that oil money. (Production may have been cut by 40 percent or so since the shah fell, but prices have more than doubled.)

Historically, stability in Iran has rested on some combination of the middle class, the left, the priests, and the armed forces. A government can rest easily on three of the four, or perhaps only two, if one of them is the army. But Khomeini, who came to power with significant support from all four—plus the *mustazafeen*—has managed to excommunicate all but the priests and the poor, and they are hardly enough to preserve anything but a prolonged anarchy.

Shapour Bakhtiar, of course, the shah's last prime minister, waits in Paris for the scepter to fall. He is a sort of hero, for now, to the middle class, but hardly to the left; and he is regarded as more of a Frenchman than an Iranian by the poor, who will hold to their new and prideful nationalism if to nothing else. And the army, having mutinied against him once before, will hardly march for Bakhtiar.

There are those who hope for another masterful unifier from the mountains, another Reza Shah to march on their Rome. There were grand rumors this summer that General Azizullah Palizban, a renegade and a Kurd, was out in the hills gathering an army and stirring up resistance, and that the shah was funneling enormous amounts of money through the Iraqis to the Arab sheiks in Khuzistan. The country is humming with conspiracy theories—evidently, there are more foreign conspiracies in the land than there are foreigners—and the plotters range from the United States to Israel to Iraq. Many intelligent Iranians will tell you that it is Britain they fear the most, John Bull resurgent, reaching out to reclaim an old colony.

But there is a clear sense that what is in place now cannot last. The mood is, if not jittery, then expectant—rather like the city that the Greek poet Cavafy described, awaiting the barbarians who are to be a solution, and who do not come. The counterrevolution is building—in a way, it has already begun—but its actors and its future must remain unclear. If, as the revolution gathered momentum last year, the middle class were the ones to watch for signs of the shah's imminent collapse, now the *mustazafeen* are the key.

If there are long-term bets to be placed, they should be placed on the left, itself divided, but which is organizing among the working class and the disaffected, especially in the oil fields. Though there is a significant historical animus, and though at the moment the left has no strong ties to Moscow, it would be naive to think that none might ever develop. In any case, after the mullahs have been thrown off, the left will be the only alternative with mass appeal.

Steven Erlanger

Steven Erlanger is assistant national editor of the *Boston Globe* and has visited Iran twice in the last year to report on events there.

Will Teddy bear any burden?

Kennedy's World

Edward Kennedy's challenge to President Carter apparently is going to be based primarily on domestic issues, but there are differences between them, too, on foreign policy. Kennedy has criticized only a few specific aspects of Carter's foreign policy performance, especially acceleration of the MX missile program and

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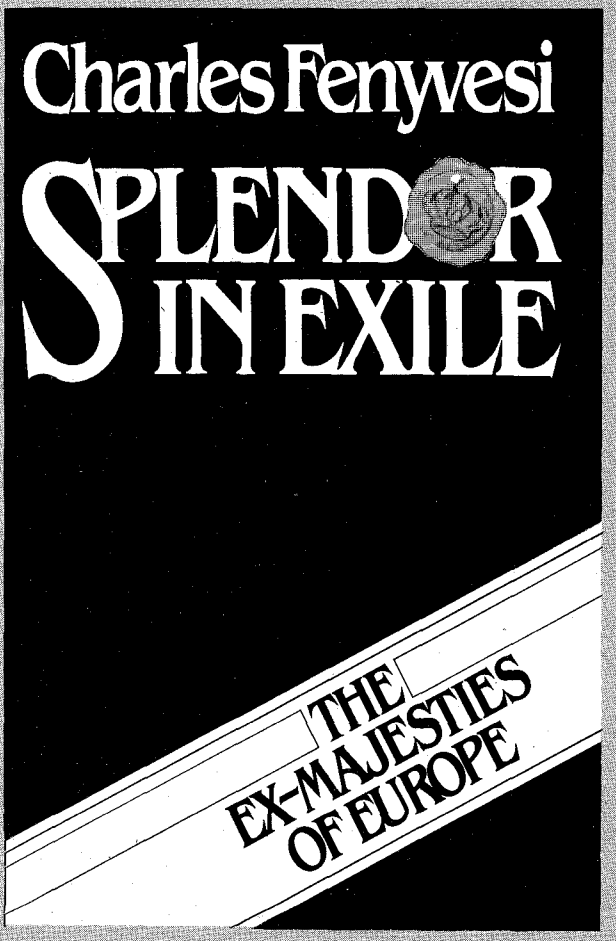
- **Dom Duarte João** of Portugal, a royal eccentric who assists refugees;
- **Wladimir Romanoff** of Russia, who insists that monarchy is Russia's only road to freedom;

and six others, including **Archduke Otto** of Austria and Hungary; **Prince Louis Ferdinand** of Germany; **King Umberto II** of Italy; **Prince Imperial Louis-Napoleon** of France; **Czar Simeon II** of Bulgaria; and **King Michael I** of Romania.



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the adequacy of US aid to Cambodian refugees, but Kennedy supporters claim their man's foreign policy would show more coherence than Carter's, a greater sense for timing and history. As Kennedy said in a speech at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York this April, "the United States needs strategy as well as tactics. We must pursue policies which are right in their own terms, but also which make sense in terms of sequence and framework." And, Kennedy said, the US needs "a deeper understanding of our essential political, economic, and military strengths, and a willingness to apply these strengths with greater determination, effectiveness, and consistency in the future." In other words, Kennedy is claiming to offer in foreign policy what his political posters will promise in the domestic realm—namely, "leadership."

There seems little question that the United States could use better, more consistent leadership than President Carter has been able to provide. The question is, will Kennedy really provide it? And, supposing he does provide it, where is it he wants to lead us?

Jimmy Carter's problems in foreign policy, it now seems clear, began with inexperience, a lack of prior acquaintanceship with the forces at work in the world and the people caught up in them. When he took office, Carter had a set of vague notions in his head of what he wanted to accomplish—"human rights," "nuclear disarmament," "peace"—but he had done little thinking (because he never had to) about how to accomplish them and how to bypass the difficulties that had made it impossible for anyone else to accomplish them earlier. He also seems to have known little about the people he was appointing to key foreign policy jobs, and about their competing agendas, with the result that he has spent his entire administration trying to reconcile and compromise among Zbigniew Brzezinski on the right, Defense Secretary Harold Brown in the middle, Cyrus Vance and his key State Department subordinates on the near left, and Andrew Young in the third world. The outcome, in policy terms, has looked halting, switching, indecisive, and sometimes downright embarrassing. Where Carter has succeeded, it has been in set-piece negotiation—SALT, Panama, Egypt-Israel, China, trade—rather than in any visionary new departures or exertions of personal or national leadership.

There is some reason to think Kennedy would be different on many of these scores. He has been in the Senate for nearly 17 years and, while he has not had to make policy, he has at least had to vote on and propose policy—that is, think about it. And there is evidence he *has* thought about it. As early as 1967, Kennedy favored approaches to the Peoples Republic of China, anticipating the Nixon initiative. He was for full normalization of relations before the Carter administration was willing to risk it, and when Carter concluded normalization, Kennedy was out ahead of the administration in recommending security guarantees for Taiwan. Instead of toying with a "China card" to provoke the Soviets, in the Brzezinski pattern, Kennedy favors parallel, self-reinforcing good relations with both the Soviets and China, using approaches to one as bargaining material with the other.

Kennedy also has well-established, consistent, and definitive positions on such issues as the Middle East, human rights, and refugees—on all of which Carter has wavered from one side to another, depending on the pressures brought to bear on him from inside or outside the administration. On the Middle East Kennedy has been a consistent supporter of Israel's security, and he reiterated his dedication last week in a personal letter carried to Prime Minister Begin by Meyer Feldman, a Washington lawyer and former White House aide to President John Kennedy.

The letter declared Kennedy supports an "undivided Jerusalem," presumably under Israeli rule, and "an Israel with secure, defensible and recognized borders"—the word "defensible" implying Israel shouldn't have to return to its pre-1967 borders. And Kennedy said he would not negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organization because it has "not abandoned terrorism" or "recognized Israel's nationhood" and right to exist in peace. The letter praised Israel's and Egypt's "ingenuity, patience and resolve" in seeking peace, and said that US policy should continue the process.

There undeniably are holes in Kennedy's position. He does not say what future he favors for the West Bank or for the Palestinian people, or what he thinks about Israeli settlements on occupied territory. A cynic could say Kennedy is simply courting Jewish voters. But he also already has their overwhelming support against Carter—from 70 percent up to 87 percent, depending on the poll one reads. Kennedy's consistent support seems designed to reassure Israel into a posture of flexibility. This is a course President Carter pursued, too, but somehow boggled.

With human rights, similarly, Kennedy has consistently advocated putting public pressure on and cutting aid off from right-wing dictatorships such as Chile, Argentina, Somoza's Nicaragua, and Park Chung Hee's South Korea. Carter began a similar policy, but often has been talked out of specific applications of it. It might be thought inconsistent of Kennedy that he is willing to establish relations with and offer aid to left-wing dictatorships such as Cuba and Vietnam, and wants to keep human rights interventions with the Soviet Union as quiet as possible. But there is at least a consistency to this inconsistency. One can question the morality or the effectiveness of offering carrots to Castro and only sticks to Somoza, and I do, but Kennedy at least has decided that he wants to do things that way. Carter isn't sure.

And Kennedy deserves credit for consistent concern about the world's refugees, its starving and homeless people. Carter, like other politicians, has shown his

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compassion about the same time that the world's television networks decide to turn their attention to boat people or Cambodians. Kennedy has been holding hearings, sending study missions, and beating drums for refugee aid since the mid-1960s.

Besides having taken stands on foreign policy over a long period, Kennedy has traveled far more widely than Carter had before becoming president, and possibly even more than Carter has during his presidency. At some leisure, without the press and without diplomatic duties, Kennedy has had a chance to talk to Brezhnev, Teng, Yamani, and the world's other leaders. And he has had the benefit of briefings from the best international scholars in the US. Just as they drop everything to talk to Kennedy before a trip or a vote, these experts presumably would be similarly available to Kennedy as president. Presumably he would know them well enough beforehand not to set up internecine warfare within his own administration. Or, if he did set it up, presumably it would be by design, as in Franklin Roosevelt's administration.

Against Kennedy's superior preparation, experience, and acquaintanceship in foreign affairs, one has to balance Kennedy's policy record. Granted that his policies have been consistent, have they been right? Granted that he knows the people he'll appoint to high posts, do we like what they stand for?

Looking at the record, it's clear that Kennedy stands in mid-left field on almost every issue of foreign policy. Ever since he began deciding on his own positions—as opposed to supporting his brother John's hawkishness or brother Robert's dovishness—Kennedy has been ever the trendy liberal. The one commendable exception has been his opposition to the volunteer army, which he is against because he believes in equal burden-sharing in US society.

Kennedy was against the war in Vietnam, of course, and voted for all the Cooper-Church resolutions to stop the bombing and "end the war." With somewhat less prescience, in February 1975 he voted to defeat President Ford's request for $522 million in extra aid to South Vietnam and Cambodia, which led to the collapse of anti-communist regimes in both countries and to the bloodbaths and repression now taking place. He accused the administration of employing "threats and scare tactics" when it warned of the consequences of communist victory. "Congress and the American people do not hold the fate of Saigon and Phnom Penh in their hands," said Kennedy; in retrospect, they did.

In the aftermath of Vietnam, Kennedy was a leading exponent of US withdrawal from a big power role in the world. On July 1, 1975, as part of the Senate's "great debate" on foreign commitments—which Kennedy helped organize—he declared:

> *We must throw off the cumbersome mantle of world policeman and limit our commitments to areas where our interests are truly involved. Our European allies have nothing to fear from our having learned this lesson; rather, it should be a welcome sign of our having finally begun to recognize the difference between real and illusory interests.*

In fact, of course, our allies did fear US withdrawal from its leadership role in the post-Vietnam era, and they would have had even more to fear if Kennedy votes had been US policy. Kennedy was a consistent supporter of the Mansfield amendment, the proposal of former Senate majority leader Mike Mansfield to withdraw US forces from Europe. In 1971, Kennedy voted to cut US forces in half. As late as 1974, he voted to return 76,000 US troops from overseas.

Historically, Kennedy has not seen America's vital interests threatened anywhere in the world. In 1975, he co-sponsored the resolution forbidding CIA funds to anti-communist rebels in Angola. He opposed the Navy's development of the island of Diego Garcia as a US base in the Indian Ocean, even though it could be used to protect US oil routes. He advocated demilitarization of the Persian Gulf in spite of the fact that it is where most of the West's oil comes from. In April 1976, he joined in writing a letter to President Ford questioning whether continued US support for South Korea's president Park might make the US an accomplice to political repression—in spite of North Korea's distinct threat to the South and nervousness in Japan. Ever since the Cyprus crisis of 1974, Kennedy has been opposed to aid for Turkey, even though that NATO ally has been near financial collapse.

Kennedy also has been a leading member of the Senate's Pentagon cutback club. Over the years he has voted and worked to delay or kill the anti-ballistic missile system, the B-1 bomber, the AWACS airborne early-warning system, cruise missiles, aircraft carriers, Trident missile submarines, Mark 12A nuclear warheads, the Sanguine communications system for missile submarines, and the neutron bomb. In fact, there is scarcely a military system that Kennedy has favored enthusiastically, except for the F-18 fighter, whose engine happens to have been manufactured at a General Electric plant in Lynn, Massachusetts.

This year, for the first time, Kennedy supported an overall increase in defense spending, voting for the administration-backed proposal to fulfill US promises for a real three percent increase in the Pentagon budget. Every other year, however, Kennedy supported amendments to cut back on defense, despite warnings that the Soviets have been upgrading their forces at a rapid rate for a decade. One administration offical said that in the last 10 years Congress has cut administration-proposed budgets by some $60 billion. "If you added up all the amendments that Teddy's voted for on top of that," he said, "I'm sure you'd get to $100 billion." As late as 1978, Kennedy supported an amendment sponsored by Senator George McGovern to transfer four percent of the Pentagon's budget to domestic programs.

A consistent thread running through Kennedy's

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foreign policy speeches is that America is economically and militarily strong and needn't panic or plunge into conflict because of Soviet activities. "The fundamental challenge we now face is not a challenge of declining American power," he said at the Council on Foreign Relations, but rather "to apply our strength effectively against the shifting sands of revolutionary change in individual nations and of continuing great power competition."

Kennedy is right as far as present circumstances are concerned. We aren't so weak that we have to defeat SALT to save ourselves from Soviet domination. But Kennedy's votes over the years have done nothing to bolster the US defense programs on which his confidence rests. And the comparative trends of US and Soviet power do point to a worrisome situation in the future. Kennedy's vote for a three percent defense increase this year, if it isn't purely political, is an admision of the adverse trend he's helped set in motion.

Many people in Washington contend one shouldn't look too closely at Kennedy's record. They argue that if the Soviets get too adventurous or assertive, Kennedy would act with firmness because he is a Kennedy.

But to accept this is to take a lot on faith. A better way of judging Kennedy's true intentions is for him to do what Ronald Reagan reportedly is considering if he wins the GOP nomination—name his cabinet in advance of the election, or at least name "policy clusters" of prospective appointees, so that voters will understand the policy cast his administration will take. It's anticipated that Reagan, if nominated, will pick a foreign policy cluster of Howard Baker (if he's not the vice-presidential nominee), George Bush, perhaps John Connally, Alexander Haig, and Henry Kissinger.

At this point, Kennedy aides give out assurances that their man takes advice from across the foreign policy spectrum. However, the names most closely associated with Kennedy are distinctly from the dovish, faintly credulous side. They include former senator Dick Clark, former arms control negotiator Paul Warnke, former White House aides Theodore Sorensen and McGeorge Bundy, and former undersecretary of state George Ball. Whomever Kennedy might think about as a secretary of defense, the word ought to be put out in advance. So far, Kennedy aides are keeping secret whom Kennedy listens to most closely.

What we are left with is Kennedy's record, which is weak, and faith that his experience and his genes will help him be strong, as against Carter's record, which is weak, and the hope that he's learned something in office. One isn't exactly inclined to cleave to either one of them as the great hope of the Western world.

Morton Kondracke

A plea for realism.

Kennedy and the Liberals

by Barney Frank

One interesting question about 1980 is how liberals will divide their time between supporting Edward Kennedy for president and criticizing him. Admittedly this question assumes that most liberals will support Kennedy for the nomination, albeit with varying degrees of enthusiasm and alacrity. But that assumption seems to me solidly grounded, both in actual observation and in the logic of the current political situation.

Liberals at the national and state levels were leaders of the draft-Kennedy movement, and his candidacy has won the support of those who preferred other potential challengers to Carter. The president will get some liberal support from those with particular ties to the administration, and from mayors and governors solicitous of good relations with their favorite funding source. But the overwhelming impression one takes away from any gathering of liberal Democrats these days is that their ideological hopes rest with Kennedy.

Carter himself recently underlined this point by drawing on the deeply conservative equation of compassion with fiscal irresponsibility in differentiating himself from Kennedy: "Senator Kennedy is much more inclined toward the old philosophy of pouring out new programs and new money to meet a social need," he told TV interviewers in Boston. Then Carter reassured conservative voters that his own tight-fistedness did not apply to the Pentagon: "I would be in favor of much stronger defense commitments than his record shows."

In addition to their conflict on this central question of how to allocate our national resources, there is also a fairly sharp liberal-conservative split between the two on the issue that could dominate next year's election:

Barney Frank is a Massachusetts state legislator.

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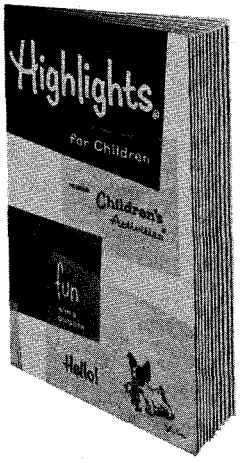

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energy. Carter remains firmly pro-nuclear and generally committed to a hard energy path, while Kennedy has moved to an anti-nuclear, pro-conservation stance. The president has pushed for price deregulation, over the senator's objections, while Kennedy has been much more vigorous than Carter in pressing for strong antitrust measures against big oil. In the area of women's rights, where Kennedy has encountered some uneasiness from feminist leaders, he has consistently voted pro-choice on the abortion issue; Carter has urged poor women to be philosophical about the unfairness of the Hyde Amendment—which he supports.

Theoretically, a more serious challenge to Kennedy's appeal to liberals could come from Jerry Brown. Seated at a typewriter, I am tempted to play with the analogy of 1980 to 1968, with an embattled southern president, a whimsically unconventional Catholic philosopher, and a Kennedy engaged in a three-way race. But analogies are second only to metaphors in their capacity to stimulate elegantly inaccurate political analysis. The situations differ radically. Unlike 1968, this is still very much a two-man contest. As Brown himself seems to realize, he has not yet gained parity with Carter or Kennedy. And his strategy for becoming a major challenger seems likely to lessen his potential for taking liberal votes from the senator. Brown has made it clear to the national press that his initial goal is to displace Carter as the runner-up to Kennedy in the early primaries. This means continued emphasis on the more conservative aspects of his approach. It is difficult to see Brown taking progressive votes away from Kennedy while stressing a constitutional amendment to balance the federal budget. And Brown's pitch to the counterculture is somewhat confused by his strong advocacy of greatly increased spending for space colonies. For the anti-nuclear activists, for whom Brown has his greatest appeal, the solar system is a nice place to get energy from, but I doubt they want to live there.

Measured against his opposition, then, Kennedy emerges as the obvious liberal choice. This is the first presidential election in my memory where a liberal consensus has been possible so early. But being more appealing than the opposition is not enough for a candidate seeking to mobilize support among an ideologically committed minority. Even as they agree—or in some cases, concede—that Kennedy is the candidate likeliest to accomplish progressive policy goals, many on the left are simultaneously calculating ways to shape Kennedy's candidacy more to their liking.

This dual approach seems to me to be a fundamental strategic error. One of the things that makes Kennedy so attractive a candidate to liberals is his ability to attract votes across the ideological spectrum. Whether and how much of a rightward swing is taking place in the country may be debatable. That recent elections have been unkind to liberals is not. It seems a bit perverse to press a liberal senator to run for president precisely because of his potentially broad voter appeal, and then, once he agreed to do so, begin to jib at his efforts to capitalize on that broad potential.

For some on the left, the problem with Kennedy is substantive. There is a group of activists, many of them deeply concerned about the interrelationship of our national corporate structure and a resource-depleting energy policy, who viewed the 1980 election more as an educational than a political opportunity. Their plan to run a third-party candidate on a platform calling for fundamental changes in our economic and energy policy has been disrupted by the Kennedy candidacy: if he is the Democratic nominee, many of their potential allies will support him, thus weakening their impact on national politics.

Forced as they may be into reluctant support of Kennedy, they will do what they can to pull him further left on the basic structural issues that matter most to them. Allied with them in this posture will be some civil libertarians who have been unhappy with Kennedy's leadership position on the Criminal Code revision. Finally, among those who are dissatisfied with Kennedy's past record are some feminist leaders, whose unhappiness arises not from Kennedy's position on the issues, but from uneasiness about his personal life, exacerbated by the absence of women in positions of major responsibility on Kennedy's staff.

A much larger group of progressive Democrats find themselves essentially quite happy with Kennedy's Senate record to date. He has, after all, been the preeminent liberal leader on a broad range of issues for several years. Indeed, had his two brothers never been political figures, Kennedy's Senate career would stand out in recent history for its consistent and effective advocacy of liberal goals on economic and social issues. But many of those who recognize this have begun to debate what their reaction should be when Kennedy begins to move toward the political center for electoral purposes.

Here an analogy does seem to me instructive. Ronald Reagan, having assured himself by years of service of the allegiance of the right, enters the 1980 race determined to project a more moderate image. And despite the liberal view that the right is dominated by zealots, this moderation does not seem to have cost Reagan any substantial part of his conservative base. Phil Crane's effort to offer the true believers a haven from Reagan's apostasy has so far sputtered badly. Lyn Nofziger's resignation from Reagan's campaign out of frustration over the candidate's preference for John Sears's moderating strategy has not led to any significant conservative defections. And John Connally's ability to move major corporate executives to open their hearts and pockets has not been accompanied by any parallel movement toward him from right-wing activists.

Apparently, conservative voters have been convinced by years of Reagan-watching that his heart is with them, and they do not seem prepared to insist that

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he emulate Barry Goldwater in 1964—or even Ronald Reagan in 1976—so that they can enjoy the warm feeling in November 1980 of interring a candidacy that died of ideological purity.

Liberals could do well to emulate them. It is of course perfectly legitimate for those who find Kennedy insufficiently committed to the need for major structural change of the American economy to press their views on him. But by now, activists ought to be somewhat skeptical of the worth of concessions they wring from candidates in the few months prior to an election. Where a candidate is relatively unknown, with little in the public record to indicate his or her views, campaign statements become, by default, the basis for judgment. But in the case of Kennedy—or Reagan or Carter—we have a long public record on which to judge. On an overriding specific issue, such as the war in Vietnam or something comparable, it makes sense to press for a specific commitment, capable of being executed by a particular decision. But to press a candidate to commit himself to broad changes in perspective that run counter to a 16-year record seems an invitation to post-election disappointment.

Worse, it seems to me politically self-defeating. Here the strategy of those substantively dissatisfied with Kennedy's liberalism merges with those who find his Senate career admirable, but worry that he will change his ideological emphasis in the presidential campaign. That is, people in both groups are prepared to object to Kennedy's efforts to stress the more moderate aspects of his record. Indeed, several liberal leaders—who privately admit that they ultimately will support Kennedy—have announced that he must not take their support for granted, that he will have to make specific commitments to them before they join his ranks.

In a different political context this would make a great deal of sense. But the fact is that while Kennedy seems to me highly likely to win the democratic nomination, he faces a very uncertain future in November. By nearly unanimous agreement, the greatest political vulnerability Kennedy has is that a moderate-appearing Republican candidate such as Baker or Bush may succeed in painting him as a free-spending, inflation-causing, poor-people-loving liberal. What I do not understand is why many of my fellow progressives think it is in our political interest to help in this effort. Were Kennedy to run a campaign in which he repudiated his past support of liberal goals, announced his infatuation with Paul Volcker, and counseled poor people and minority groups to tighten their belts, liberals would rightly be angered. But this is neither what he has done nor what he is going to do.

Candidates who radically shift long-held public positions in midstream rarely succeed. In politics, it is a lot easier to alienate your friends than to win over your enemies. What Kennedy has begun to do—and what he will almost certainly continue to do in the campaign—is to shift some of the emphasis in his approach. There are in his record a number of issues he sincerely believes in which belie the knee-jerk caricature his opponents—Democratic and Republican—will seek to portray. It does not seem to me a betrayal of liberalism for Kennedy to stress his own concern with inflation or his leadership in the fight for deregulation. His position on the crime bill is unattractive to many liberals—but it is hardly one that he has adopted solely for campaign purposes. Indeed, the current version of recodification that Kennedy is pushing is far less of a problem to civil libertarians than the original version, now that Representative Robert Drinan has replaced the late senator John McClellan as Kennedy's major collaborator in this effort.

Kennedy's political task for 1980 is to hold on to the broad support he now has in the polls. To do this, he has to reach voters who disagree with some of the specifics in the liberal program he has worked for in the Senate, as well as many who are indifferent to these concerns. He will—I hope—do this by stressing a range of themes that respond to current popular concern about inflation and social turbulence. Knowing as we do from his record that he approaches this task from a basic commitment to a coherent, progressive ideology, it makes little political sense for liberals to demand that he periodically stop to reassure us.

American politics has become more fractious in the past decade than in previous history. To many activists, simply supporting a candidate without simultaneously seeking to press further ideological commitment on him or her seems almost unworthy. After all, we are not political drones blindly giving our allegiance to a leader, but independent thinkers whose support must be purchased with ideological coin. But, especially when the ideology to which one is committed is under severe political attack, even the most zealous ideologues must decide which candidate represents our best chance to win a very tough and important election. And the appropriate response in such a case is to support the candidate—not to threaten to defect when he or she seeks to win over those uncommitted to our vision, but rather to hope that the effort succeeds so that we can shape public policy in the post-election period.

In Edward Kennedy, liberals have a candidate whose long public record demonstrates a commitment to a coherent progressive approach to issues. He is not the perfect liberal, and in the course of a long campaign he will at times deviate even more than he has in the past from the liberal standard. Voting for a perfect candidate is a nice feeling, and I experienced it once, when I voted for myself the first time I ran for the Massachusetts Legislature. By the time I came up for reelection, I had a few problems with my record. But I overlooked them because I figured I was the best candidate I was going to get in my district, and campaigned for me as hard as I could.

I am prepared to make similar allowances to help elect a liberal president, since I can think of no better way to advance liberal goals in 1980.

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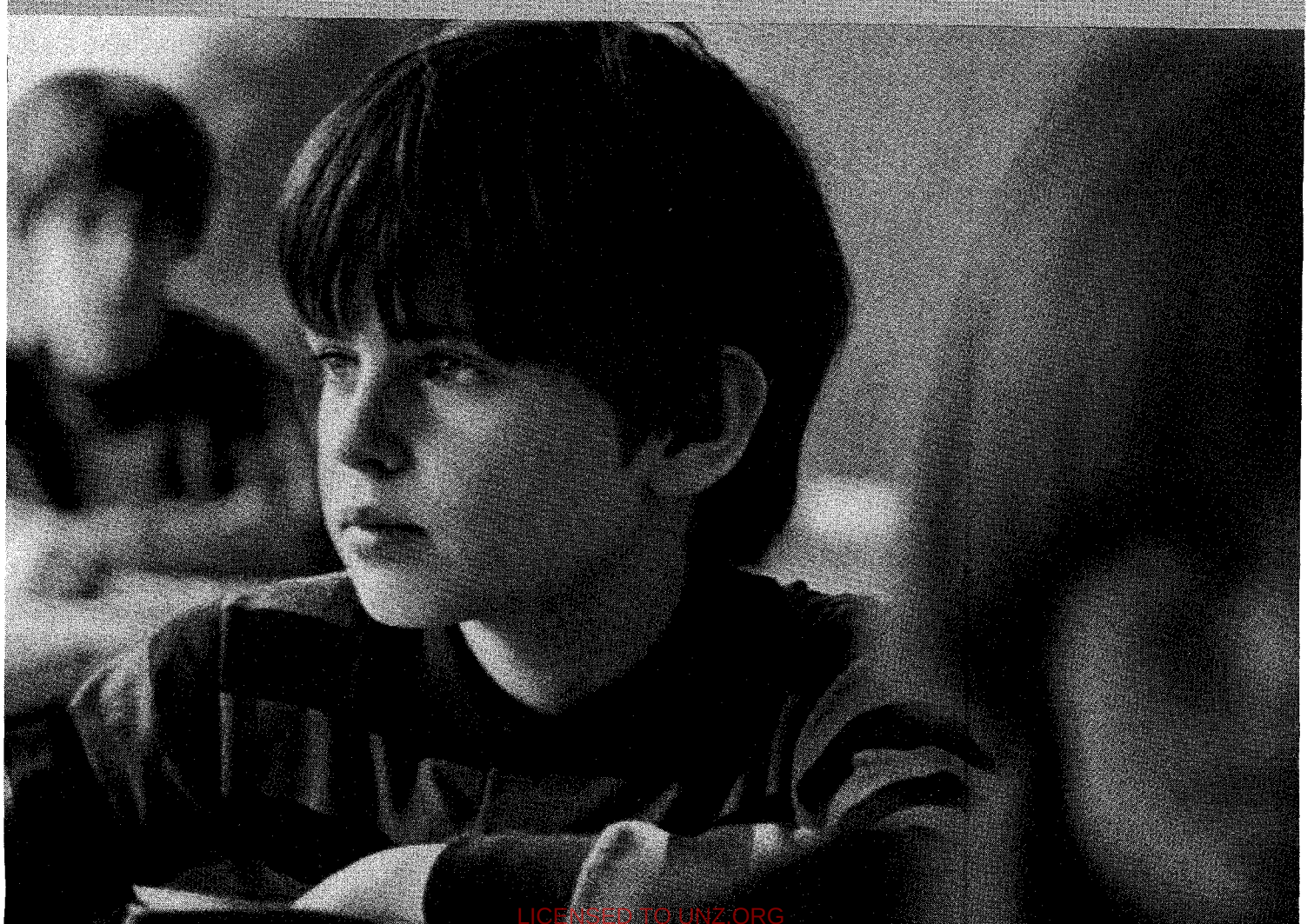

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Books and the Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on films

Mostly Mozart

Ingmar Bergman's film of *The Magic Flute* had an original and sharp idea behind it: interplay among the three worlds of the stage, backstage, and audience, with a traditional theater performance as the center. What was the idea behind Joseph Losey's film of *Don Giovanni*? To make an opera performance into a film: to take the characters out of stage scenery into the world and have the plot "happen." A trite idea and a very limiting one. The project originated with Rolf Liebermann (wrote Roland Gelatt in *American Film*, April 1979), who engaged Losey. Liebermann, the head of the Paris Opera, said: "A way must be found to democratize opera. . . . I was drawn inevitably to film." Democratize? How many are going to see this film other than those who already care about *Don Giovanni*? School and college classes will inevitably be subjected to it, if that is democratization. But both students and devotees may be left with some of the questions that bother me. Here are a few.

Why was a quotation from Antonio Gramsci, the Italian communist leader, affixed as epigraph? Is Losey trying to lump *Don Giovanni* with *The Marriage of Figaro* as a revolutionary work? Why was the sound of the sea worked under the credits? Why was the film set in Italy—in Palladio country and in Venice—instead of the Spain of the libretto and the Don Juan tradition? Why was a mute nemesis character added, a sententiously grim valet in black who attends the don throughout? (And who suggests Fellini more than fate.) Why was a visit to a glass-blowing plant included during the overture? Was it only to "plant" the fiery furnance for use at the end? Then how did that glass-blowing plant get to be right in the don's home at the end? And why does the don accidentally tumble into the furnace at the end, instead being dragged down to hell by the Commander? Joseph Kerman may be right, in *Opera as Drama*, when he says that "suddenly theology was thrust on [Mozart] at the end of *Don Giovanni*," but for what reason does Losey unburden Mozart? And why such a silly accident to end this complex ironic comedy?

More questions. Why was a *film* made of this opera without a don who on *film*—never mind opera-house experience—could be convincing? Why do it at all without someone like Pinza or Siepi? Why choose a Zerlina who is clearly old enough to be Zerlina's mother and who is obviously corseted? Why does the angry Masetto simply stand there watching while Zerlina and the don roll over one another on a farm wagon? How does Donna Elvira wander so easily into the don's bedroom to save Zerlina from the don who is already literally upon her? Why is there a group of immobile onlookers watching the don cajole Zerlina in "*La ci darem*"? What sound-level did the engineers have in mind when they recorded the entire performance? The effect of being present in a theater or of listening to a recording? Whichever they chose, why does it come out disco level? Why did Lorin Maazel, who conducted, choose to make Mozart sound like Mahler? (And I despise music-box Mozart.) Bernard Shaw said that Mozart "reveals the hero's spirit in . . . elate darting rhythms as of summer lightning made audible"; why did Maazel make them sound like summer thunder?

Were all the above matters meant as democratization?

Enough questions. Once in a while in the course of this film—which is the opera uncut, so far as I can tell—Losey almost touches what was essential throughout: the creation of a para-reality, the realization of a world of sung drama *off* the stage. But Losey keeps puncturing the para-reality with matters like those cited. There's no evidence that he knew this, or that he had any idea cognate to Bergman's to govern his filming. He just tried to think of a lot of ways to skin past the basic abrasion between two media.

In film terms, the two most successful performers are Kiri Te Kanawa, the Donna Elvira, and Edda Moser (who suggests Constance Cummings), the Donna Anna.

American films may be in the beginning of an epidemic. Cases: *Something Short of Paradise* and *Starting Over*, already reviewed, and the more recent *French Postcards*, *And Justice for All*, and *Head over Heels*, not worth reviewing. The common denominator among them is that they all start with a realistic premise, at least moderately interesting, and then develop movie-itis: the stories leave the land of the recognizable, where people behave out of comprehensible motive, to enter the land of Hollywood invention, where they obey the extrinsic (and usually stale) orders of scriptwriters.

If this gaggle of gag-sunk films portends anything, it may be that an era is ending, an era that began late in the 1960s with *Blow-up* (a huge influence because it was the first foreign sound film to get wide US distribution) and *The Graduate*. Before that, allowing for exceptions and for the grossness of generalization, one can say that US films were Hollywood scriptwriters' films: they were more or less amusing or moving, sometimes superbly one or the other, but they were concoctions, not to

(continued on page 38)

Films Worth Seeing

Apocalypse Now. No dram of the moral drama it pretends to, but an eerily gorgeous rendering of the Vietnam horror-fantasy.

Breaking Away. Breezy dialogue and acting turn this sitcom about adolescent fantasies and barriers into touching comedy.

Monty Python's Life of Brian. And death. Yet funny, wickedly and continuously. The making of a messiah, a contemporary of Jesus, against his will.

Nosferatu. Werner Herzog's version of the 1923 film has richness in it, but nothing richer than Klaus Kinski's performance—the first *performance*—of Dracula.

SK

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Robert Brustein on theater

Sex and Power in the New York Theater

Two cold, potent productions opened within a short while of each other that are deserving of attention; and one of them forces me to revise my hasty conclusion of some weeks ago that nothing new was happening under the New York sun. I don't mean to say that either is a work of any magnitude, just that both have force and courage, commendable qualities in a theater not usually known for its bravery. Neither of these productions goes out of its way to please its audience, or, for that matter, its critics, and that creates a kind of tension in the house which adds electricity to the atmosphere. Not enough, I would guess, to charge the generators of the box office, but for that kind of connection, you need a different brand of jumper cables.

The productions I am referring to are *Losing Time* (written by John Hopkins, at the off-Broadway Manhattan Theater Club) and *Evita* (lyrics by Tim Rice, music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, at the Broadway Theater). The first has the look of a conventional domestic drama, set in one of those artificial living rooms that short-circuit your interest the moment the curtain opens. Wobbly flats, stuffed furniture, plastic skylights, amputated wooden beams in cross section—this is the detritus of somebody else's quarters, promising agony amidst the crockery, suds, and sofas, condominium confessions.

The opening dialogue—between a ballbreaker in her 30s who inhabits this apartment and the pathetic battered creature who descends upon her, dazed and bleeding—is not terribly promising either. Ruth, played by Shirley Knight, has been raped on a New York street; Joanne, played by Jane Alexander, offers hardboiled advice and—after Ruth's divorced husband refuses to help her—sexual consolation. Ruth describes the assault in ugly detail. The attacker pulled her into an alley, threatened her with a knife, and used his "thing" as she calls it (her decorous language is in sharp contrast to Joanne's foulmouthed directness) to debase and humiliate her. Miss Knight's persuasive enactment of terror and disgust makes us recoil further, feeling trapped in our seats, the unwilling voyeurs of an intensely private moment.

By the end of the act, a theme seems to have detached itself from the play, one which almost tempted me to detach myself from my seat: *viz.* that since men are unfeeling bastards, the only sexual solution for a sensitive woman is the embrace of another female. Subsequent scenes, however, soon reveal that for this playwright callousness has no gender. Ruth confesses that she actually seduced her attacker and enjoyed his vicious assualt on her. Joanne verbally annihilates a macho make-out artist from her office, after first pretending to enjoy his lovemaking. Ruth goads his companion into smacking her around by questioning his virility and grabbing his balls. Joanne transforms another man—bent on the task of rescuing Ruth from her influence—into a raging animal who almost chokes Joanne to death, thereby experiencing sexual release. By the play's end, it is clear that the writer finds *all* sexual relations to be brutal, faithless, corrupt. Ruth eventually leaves Joanne as well, convinced that the only lover she can trust is herself.

It's all absurd, of course, a kind of Sacher-Masoch primer in domestic relations; and its sexual obsessiveness, its insistence that the act of love is really only an act of cruelty or power, and its implied message of narcissism all make the play look like an exercise in dementia. What redeemed some of this for me was the playwright's absolute conviction, and his control—except when the dialogue falls into psychobabble—of abusive language. Ferocious, vitriolic, febrile, scorching, the sounds and sights of this evening are not pleasant; you leave the theater feeling as if someone has ground glass into your ears and eyes; but it's rather like watching Strindberg without the tender moments, Edward Albee with the gloves off. In short, Hopkins's singlemindedness forcibly compels interest; I could tell by the way this largely middle-class audience squirmed that it was paying a price for its presence, that it was getting a glimpse of something awful, perhaps a little fragment of recognizable truth. Also, the production is powerfully acted, fully committed. It is rare to see such accomplished actors—Miss Alexander and Miss Knight in particular—so open and willing to lay themselves on the line.

What distinguishes *Evita*, on the other hand, is Harold Prince's direction. This

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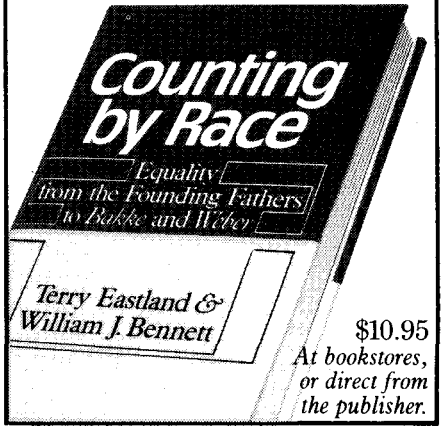

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production could serve as a primer for directing students in the techniques of epic theater. It is often said that the musical is our answer to Elizabethan drama, but all this usually means is that singers address their numbers to the audience the way Shakespeare's characters address their soliloquies and asides. *Evita*, however, provides a little substance for that claim. Synthesizing the conventions of Sondheim musicals with Brecht's alienation devices, Prince has somehow evolved an original presentational style of his own.

A few commentators have reacted to this presentation with the same sort of shock one saw in the faces of that horrified audience, in Mel Brooks's *The Producers*, watching Nazi stormtroopers high-kick through a number called "Springtime for Hitler." Is Eva Peron, the wife of Argentina's dictator, a fitting subject for a commercial musical, forsooth? Well, first of all, *Evita* is not a musical but an opera, being almost entirely sung and serious in intention, whatever its value; and operas, as we know, can be composed on any subject, no matter how lofty or silly. Secondly, its heroine is pretty remote from our political concerns, even if one could make the argument (which I reject) that some subjects are too hot for theatrical consideration. It is true that Evita flirted with fascism, that she stashed away jewels and cash in a Swiss bank, and that she eventually betrayed her working-class constituency (the *descamisados*, or shirtless ones)—but that was in another country, and besides, the wench is dead. Anyone still deeply exercised by Eva Peron's perfidy has the option of remaining home.

As a matter of fact, Timothy Rice and Anthony Lloyd Webber, who wrote the show, make little effort to exonerate Evita. How could they, when they are so busy—both in scenes showing her agitating for women's rights and in those dramatizing her corruption by power—trying to display their liberal credentials in an effort to placate their critics. But the political implications of *Evita* are the least convincing aspect of the work, just as religion was the one thing missing from *Jesus Christ Superstar*. What apparently attracts them to Eva Peron is her surefire blend of sex, show biz, and ambition; she is, in short, another superstar who experiences a similar rise from poor beginnings to great influence. I suspect that the real subject of Rice and Webber is success, its rewards and human cost, and that has about as much political, religious, or intellectual significance as one finds in *Aida* or *Madame Butterfly*.

The most important function of the opera, however, is as a springboard for Hal Prince's imagination, and its not very distinguished score serves as a storytelling medium which adds pace and momentum to his theatricalist inventions. These include some pretty dazzling directorial leaps and at least three strong performances. Patti LuPone, with a cruel slashed mouth and a lithe peasant body, brings shellacked sensuality and enameled cunning to the part of Evita. Bob Gunton as Juan Peron has the air of a smug, icy, surreptitious conspirator. And Mandy Patinkin, as a tenor Brechtian chorus named Che Guevara, adds enough tortured irony to make you forget, if not forgive, the absurdity of finding a Cuban revolutionary from the 1950s and 1960s in Argentina in the 1930s and 1940s.

One of the delights of the evening is the stunning use of graphics. Prince integrates stage movement with period photographs and motion pictures in a manner that at last allows you to absorb both simultaneously (one's impulse is usually to look at a screen) and thus observe their ironic interplay—as, for example, when he pulls two seated stage characters back toward the rear at the same time that he pulls back the screen and shrinks the image. In order to dramatize Evita's failing health, he slows the newsreel of her visit to Europe until it is nothing more than series of stop frames, as if her blood and nerves were freezing. Furthermore, with the aid of two brilliant designers, Timothy O'Brien and Tazeena Firth, Prince has formalized and made essential virtually every moment of the evening. Through the game of musical (rocking) chairs, he sketches the struggle for power among a group of Argentine colonels; with a platform, a little bunting, and two slide projections, he creates the impression of a massive political rally in a public square. A chorus of toy-like soldiers in blue, gold, and white represent the automated military; a chorus of aristocrats in dress suits and gowns represent the frivolous upper classes. This is what Brecht meant by *Gestus*—cutting away everything from the crucial image and gesture.

Using more familiar Brechtian techniques as well, such as exposed lighting instruments and scenic devices, Prince has not flinched from cold alienation effects. The audience never is permitted to "enter" the action emotionally, or even to respond emotionally to the score (the exception being a stirring anthem called "Don't Cry For Me, Argentina," where the very word "Argentina" takes on the quality of a ritual incantation). The result is an ice-cold, brilliantly theatrical, remorseless reenactment of a moment in history; and any director who can smuggle this kind of thing onto a Broadway stage, disguised as a lavish expense-account musical, deserves our respect and attention.

His aim is to see beauty in the ugly.

The Novelists: John Hawkes

by Thomas LeClair

John Hawkes has been publishing novels for 30 years, yet readers still are discovering him with appropriate amazement. Hawkes's method has been subtraction, taking away familiar setting, plot, pragmatic causality, and ordinary life, replacing them with obsession and lyricism. Because Hawkes has insisted on detachment from his original creations, readers have been unusually curious about him and his purposes.

During his three-day visit to the University of Cincinnati, I found "Jack" Hawkes, as he likes to be called, a gentle man, very sensitive to his physical surroundings, inquisitive about people he met, generous with students. About 5 feet 8 inches tall, Hawkes at 54 looks more professorial—he teaches at Brown—than his jacket photos suggest.

Thomas LeClair teaches English at the University of Cincinnati.

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He is anxious about public appearances, but he reads his fiction with great vitality, turning the darkest pages into laughter. When we taped this interview, he spoke openly about his work, with the passion of a man sometimes misread.

Since *The Cannibal* was published in 1949, Hawkes has written six other novels, several novellas, short stories, and plays. *Second Skin* (1964) is his most widely known book and is, in my opinion, one of the best American novels of the last 30 years. *The Lime Twig*, "about" horse-racing, and *The Beetle Leg*, "about" the American West, are fine early works. This decade's triad of

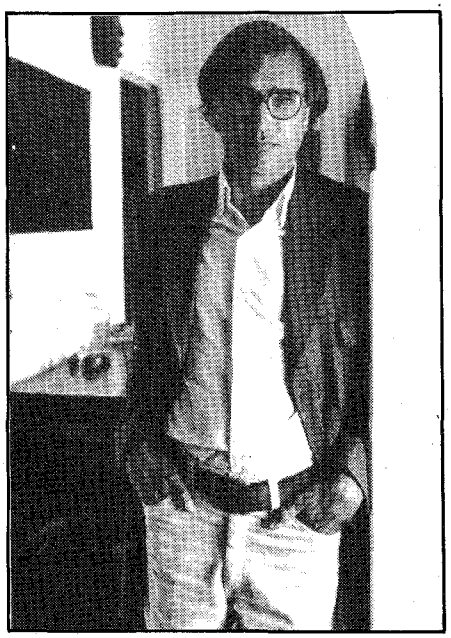

photo of John Hawkes by Jerry Bauer

novels dealing with sex and the imagination—*The Blood Oranges; Death, Sleep and the Traveler*; and *Travesty*—is both more self-conscious and more public.

* * *

Thomas LeClair: *John Gardner has recently reintroduced the issue of morality in fiction. I wondered what you had to say about morality in fiction.*

John Hawkes: The novelist's first allegiance is to his art, but it's impossible for me to think of fiction without a moral center. Mine is Conradian. My work is an effort to expose the worst in us all, to cause us to face up to the enormities of our terrible potential for betrayal, disgrace, and criminal behavior. I think that it is necessary to destroy repression while showing at the same time that the imagination is unlimited. I haven't read John Gardner's book, but I would be disappointed if he didn't see my work as having the darkest yet most luminous moral center of almost anyone else's.

LeClair: *You said once you wanted to destroy conventional morality.*

Hawkes: The work that is deeply and truly moral violates conventional morality. The writer who sets out to create his own world in a sense defies the world around him. He has to become an outcast, an outsider. He works in isolation to create something which to him is a thing of beauty, as well as a thing of knowledge and moral meaning. And that act is a risk, an assault on the world as we think we know it, and as such can be viewed as dangerous, destructive, criminal. But I think it is necessary to go to extremes. The writer knows what it is like to rebel, to defy, to be alone in situations of extreme risk, so he has an ultimate sympathy with those who have been judged as unfit for conventional society.

As I said, Conrad is, to me, the most moral writer that I can think of and the one whose work most appeals to me because he is always concerned with "the blow that could strike from under." For Conrad, the best of men are never safe from their innermost impulses. If a person doesn't know that he too is not so different from the criminal, is potentially as much an outcast, then he is likely to suffer from a lack of personal insight, and will judge others with excessive harshness. I'm interested in the truest kind of fictive sympathy, as Albert Guerard, my former teacher and lifelong friend, has put it. To him the purpose of imaginative fiction is to generate sympathy for the saved and damned alike.

LeClair: *Would you call your fiction a combination of idealism and innocence?*

Hawkes: Idealism, innocence, and luminous, murderous impulse. Yes, it's true that I am an idealistic writer. The word "innocence" is somewhat disturbing, but I am afraid that I really can't evade it. I've been trying to destroy my own innate innocence for a long time now, over 30 years, but it still permeates my work. If my novels are experienced by some people as nightmarish and overwhelmingly dark, oppressive, and pessimistic, I can only say that the opposite is also true: the lyrical quality of my work is a reflection of my preoccupation with innocence.

LeClair: *It seems to me that much of the best contemporary American fiction is obsessive. Do you consider your fiction to be obsessive?*

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Hawkes: Of course. I have certain obsessive themes or subjects that I keep returning to; I'm obsessed with horses, birds, destructive sexuality, death, children. My fiction is driven from the unconscious; its energy comes from deep psychic conflicts. I don't mean that I'm simply trying to exorcise my personal self: rather, I'm trying to touch on matters that are important to the inner lives of all people.

LeClair: *Could you talk about the function of comedy in your work and what you have called the "language of vision"?*

Hawkes: Most of my work is comic. On the other hand, I'm not an academic person, so the term "comic" is difficult for me to explain. I think comedy works in two opposite directions in my fiction. On the one hand, certain kinds of comedy in my work are used to revenge childhood indignities and all we've been made to suffer by the wrong kind of narrow-minded judgments imposed upon us by district attorneys, teachers, parents. This comedy could be called injurious farce. Malvolio in *Twelfth Night* might be an example. The opposite extreme is the comedy that is lyrical and saving, full of grace, full of harmony. It's a comedy that brings all things together in joyous resolution. Viola, the heroine of *Twelfth Night*, represents this comedy. Her personality is dismembered, she suffers violence, but then the true and lovely Viola emerges by the end of the play.

The language of vision is even more difficult to get at. For me, in my own way, as for Nabokov in his great way, language is my first love, and I use the word "vision" to mean the kind of fiction that is as original, as of the moment, as any fiction can be. When fiction is original and yet speaks to all our primary and disturbing needs, it is phrased in a language that has a life of its own, an energy of its own, and takes on characteristics of what I would call visionary life.

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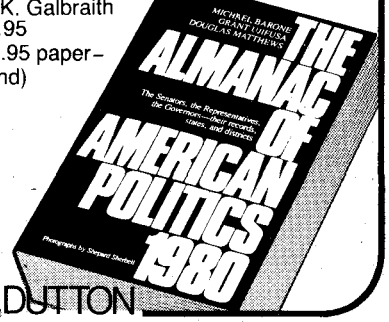
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LeClair: *I've heard you say that you were trying to reveal the essential beauty of the ugly.*

Hawkes: That's a compressed way of phrasing what we've been talking about so far. The fiction writer discovers the beauty of all forms of life; all of life is worthy of his gargantuan interest, sympathy, and love. I'm not an advocate of ugliness. I deplore violence. I want to lead a safe, ordinary life with my wife and children and my friends and students. But ugliness is as essential to fiction as it is to the dream.

LeClair: *You've spoken of the potential for poetic excitements and fulfillments in "sexual extension," yet in your triad*—The Blood Oranges, Death, Sleep and the Traveler, *and* Travesty—*sexual extension leads more and more into destructivenss and self-destruction. Would you talk about that?*

Hawkes: I see writing as an act of eroticizing the landscape. I think of myself as a totemic or fetishistic writer. For me, every object, every fictional detail, becomes energized with its own meaning, its own life. I'm a sensual writer and a sensuous writer. If we talk about eroticism or sexuality as being polar (as with comedy), lyric sensualizing can't assume its true shape unless the pain and risk involved in sensuality are also present. My work affirms the imagination, yet I couldn't help but end that triad of fictions—about the relationship between sexuality and the imagination—on a severe note. The dangers of the most joyous of human experiences had to reassert themselves. These are so much at the center of human life that we should know that our clearest impulses toward love inevitably involve pain as well as joy. I wanted the final statement to be paradoxically the most erotic and, at the same time, the most shockingly severe, so that the reader would pause and think about the magnitude of the erotic impulse.

LeClair: *Each novel in the triad has a pornographer or a viewer of pornography. What is your attitude toward pornography?*

Hawkes: Sex is impossible without the imagination. Pornography is conducive to imaginative response. The "cheapest" pornography still offers its "ideal" of sexual fantasy. I'm not much interested in the therapeutic aspect of pornography, but no doubt pornography serves as a release for those who might otherwise act out repressed sexual urges aggressively.

But the important thing, for me, is that even now, in our so-called liberated world, the female body is exploited on the one hand and tabooed on the other. The female body needs to be demystified. Whatever we think of pornography, it does exist in opposition to taboo, censorship, suppression, prudery, and in this sense it has its kinship with fiction.

LeClair: *The suicidal narrator—the artist figure—in your latest novel* Travesty *is going to kill his daughter, the poet Henri, and himself. Is destructiveness the achievement of art?*

Hawkes: Destructiveness is certainly a necessary element of the kind of fiction I'm committed to. But when I wrote *Travesty*, I wasn't consciously thinking about the deplorable nature of the act of trying to commit suicide or trying to commit murder through the deliberate crashing of an automobile. Instead I was focusing on the intensity and purity of concentration that are needed to imagine the unimaginable. The only reason that the narrator drives the car so deliberately toward total destruction is to force himself and his double, Henri the poet, to imagine their own deaths. Death—cessation, annihilation—is the only thing I can think of that cannot be imagined. The only way that the artist-driver of the car can imagine it is through paradox. He conceives of the wreckage before it occurs; he recognizes that in destruction there is always a design for those of us who want to seek it; and he sees that in any design, any created thing, there is always the potential for the loss of its beautiful shape and its collapse into chaos.

I once read something by André Breton about an abandoned locomotive in a jungle, and saw in my mind's eye an enormous rusting piece of machinery with vines, flowers, and trees growing around and through it. The moment I read about Breton's locomotive, I realized that throughout my writing life I too had been taking the ruined object, the dead object, as much more revealing of the thing itself than the live, functioning object.

LeClair: *Is your new novel,* The Passion Artist, *going to be accessible to more readers? Is it a new direction for you?*

Hawkes: I hope so. It's about a middle-

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aged widower who, in a "mythical" European country, is introduced to the nature of woman in the prison where his mother is confined for the murder of his father.

I've decided that the three most important subjects are consciousness, the imagination, and the nature of woman. In *The Passion Artist* I've tried to create the worst possible protagonist I could think of—a sort of Malvolio who is crazed by his ignorance of women. But for once I've tried to deal with a topical theme, by dramatizing the power of women. That's something new for me. . . .

The Passion Artist by John Hawkes

(Harper & Row; $9.95)

The preoccupation with sexual anxiety and impotence may mislead readers into seeing *The Passion Artist* as a continuation of Hawkes's trilogy: *Blood Oranges, Death, Sleep and the Traveler, Travesty.* But the new novel has little of their sinuous, suave, playful sophistication, and very few moments of perverse bliss. It represents, rather, an altogether conscious and very powerful return, after 30 years, to the bleak, devastated fictive world and the psychic cripplings of *The Cannibal.*

The joyless landscape is now anonymously Eastern European rather than German, and there is no specific connection with political history. We have instead a microcosm dominated by violent women. At the end of *The Cannibal* the citizens, "revived already with the public spirit," file back into the insane asylum. At the end of *The Passion Artist* La Violaine, though no longer a prison, remains under the control of women. "La Violaine": a lovely word with unlovely connotations: *viol* (rape), *vilaine* (ugly, filthy, loathsome). The disgust with normal sexuality may be merely that of the regressive anti-hero Konrad Vost. But the pervasive misogyny is that of an intense, dynamic authorial imagination, and it is even more explicit than Faulkner's. *The Passion Artist* is, whatever its deficiencies, a serious work of art.

The differences in style, as one looks back to the opening of *The Cannibal,* are radical. Highly controlled statement has replaced metaphor:

> *The town, roosting on charred earth, no longer ancient, the legs and head lopped from its only horse statue, gorged itself on straggling beggars and remained gaunt beneath an evil cloaked moon. Rattling trains turned back at the sight of the curling rails blossoming in the raw spring on the edge of town opposite the hill, and fields, plummeted with cannon balls, grew stained with the solitary need of beasts and men.*
>
> (*The Cannibal*)

> *The cemetery, not far from the park for children, more or less marked the center. And always the dust, the dry air, the sound of iron against iron, the visibility of systems (for trains, traffic, school, prison, playground, cemetery), the signs and posters displayed in shopwindows or pasted to bare walls in order to fix for the eye a steam-pressing mechanism, a suit of clothes, a wrench, a bowl of food. Here was the outcome of the centuries of death and agony; the paths of the great minds ended here; dreamers of palaces and holocausts had invented nothing. And what was this city, denying in its daily life the validity of recorded history, if not the very domain of the human psyche?*
>
> (*The Passion Artist*)

It would be idle to demand of a highly conscious and expert novelist in his 50s the primitive, even atavistic energies of a man of 23. But the conventional intellectuality of style of most of the first 57 pages of *The Passion Artist* is dismaying: periodic, ponderous, even pedantic sentences; a *written* quality reminiscent of Thomas Mann and even James. This prose faithfully reflects the sluggish mentality and uneventful daily life of Konrad Vost. The quotidian monotony is broken, to be sure, by traumatic events. Konrad is seduced by his guardian Anna Kossowski and drenched by the urine of a loved horse, also named Anna Kossowski; he is drawn into the suppression of the women prisoners' revolt, and so confronts his fierce mother, incarcerated in La Violaine for the murder of his father; he betrays to the authorities both his own daughter and the child prostitute who awakened his reluctant sexuality; he encounters, fatally, the child prostitute's father. . . . But a synopsis of a Hawkes novel makes no more sense, after all, than those summaries by which critics used to ridicule the novels of Faulkner.

The first 57 pages of *The Passion Artist* convey as authentically as any in modern fiction the listlessness of the commonplace, the tedium of ordinary life. There is, by way of relief, one expertly pornographic section as Konrad Vost submits to fellatio, minutely described, by a child prostitute. He has found her in the schoolyard where he had sought his daughter Mirabelle. She too, he there learns, is a prostitute, and he reports the daughter to the police. The experience has been, through the substitution of schoolgirls, incestuous.

The writing in this scene is precise and coldly brilliant, the sexuality extraordinarily explicit and undisplaced, the girl's face "buried in his disheveled groin." The "white thread from the bloody pump" becomes, 26 pages later, an "army of mice" in his "locked and inaccessible loins," running through "the forest that was filled with snow." Near the end of the novel there are armies of mice as Konrad Vost explores the hindquarters of a horse he has named "Anna Kossowski" after the mature women he secretly loves. He awakens from a crucial dream to find himself burdened by a silver hand that becomes, eight pages later, his "silver twig"—his penis. He had been as a child the expert trumpeter on a silver horn. And now we see, looking back to page 78, that masturbation was a source of anxiety and guilt: "His fingers on the valves of his trumpet were like mice in a forest filled with snow." How much more transparent displacement (Hawkes might ask) do you want? My point is that this mode (displacement and metaphorical statement so obvious as to be comic) had been the norm in much earlier fiction of Hawkes, as it is a norm for *The Painted Bird,* whereas in *The Passion Artist* it is comparatively rare. The fears are now for the most part undisguised, the disgust overt and expository.

The later portions of *The Passion Artist* return us, however, to the tension and stylistic power of the best earlier fiction. "Mutilated railway trains were again running according to no schedule on the

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tracks of silence." The imaginative attraction to decay even compensates for the grammatical formalities; the old Hawkesian entropies have returned. What a pleasure, after those early academic pages, to come upon rotten ribs, underground rivers, excrement!

More fence posts, the rotten ribs and backbone of a small boat, brightly colored marsh plants festering in sockets of ice, the fragments of a shattered aqueduct gray and dripping where moments before there had been only flatness and emptiness, abrupt discolorations that revealed quicksand or underground rivers: it was all an agglomeration of flashing mirrors, the strong cold salty air was impossibly heavy with the smell of human excrement and of human bodies armed and booted and decomposing under the ferns, behind piles of rocks, in the depths of the wells. Had it once been a landscape of nighttime skirmishing? Was it then the terrain of at least some kind of history? At any moment an iron ship might loom before him, or the vast trench of a communal grave.

A second-rate writer merely imitates himself; a great writer has his iconography and, in Hawkes's own words, his "chordal insistences." Hawkes has commented on the recurrence in his fiction of desolate abandoned structures where crucial psychic experiences occur. Metaphor, far more than in most contemporary writers, is meaning. In the crucial pages of *The Passion Artist* the great energizing fears of Hawkes's fiction reappear, the essential movements of the classic interior journey. There are, for very attendant ears, echoes of Conrad and Faulkner.

By touch he entered the stone enclosure: hands on wet rocks, he waited without resistance for snarling dog, flash of light, the singing iron tines of a pitchfork flung like a spear in his direction. Unexpected suffering had been contrived for him at the millpond and grove of death; why not here?

The immediate destination is a barn, reached "by following the slimy roughness of the enclosure," in which Konrad Vost will lie beneath a terrifying horse and even more terrifying women: women simultaneously exciting and repulsive, while the horse stamps in darkness.

The longing to return to the womb and the dread of the vagina can be almost simultaneous. Down Anna Kossowski's thigh march two long single files of black ants. The fears—but now, I think, the explicitness is a source of genuine horror—are classic: castration and engulfment. The pleasures of sexual initiation?

Then slowly she spread her thighs still farther apart, thus releasing him. In his surprise he tottered and felt her two hands climbing up his body and to the top of his head; he felt his nakedness become unstuck from the still unseen sandy nakedness of the waiting woman. . . .

How did Hawkes move from the relatively quiet realism of the first 57 pages to the dynamic unrepressed power of the latter sections? Almost certainly, I think, through the mechanism of the dream . . . specifically the archetypal dream of a train on which Konrad Vost is the sole passenger. In one of its compartments he will see a coffin; "the darkness filling the body inside the coffin was also filling himself." The interior night journey is also a journey toward death.

My impression is that Hawkes's imagination had found itself trapped, in the early pages, by the very success with which it had evoked an ultimate drabness, the colorless reality of the almost empty city and the bleak little café across the street from the prison, a dusty world without joy or fantasy. But to take this train, to enter consciously the world of dream, helped Hawkes rediscover his own congenial materials and visionary mode. The later sections of *The Passion Artist* are among the most poignant and most powerful in Hawkes's now extensive and truly classical *oeuvre*.

Albert J. Guerard

Albert J. Guerard is a novelist and critic. He is the author of *The Triumph of the Novel: Dickens, Dostoevsky, Faulkner* (Oxford).

Utopian Thought in the Western World by Frank E. Manuel and Fritzie P. Manuel

(The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press; $25)

"It is Almost the Year Two Thousand" wrote Robert Frost in the title of a poem reminding us of a primal golden age and alerting us to a second and final one ahead, "the true Millennium." We are even closer now to that year, and already there are signs present in the West attesting to the continuing spell that for so long in mankind's history has been cast by thousand-year periods and especially their endings and beginnings. Eruptions of millennialist fervor are to be seen tumbling all over the religious landscape, and they may be expected to proliferate. Kenneth Clark in his *Civilization* tells us that the whole character of the West began to change immediately after the year 1000 had come and gone. Hope and activity replaced, in widening circles, pessimism and passivity.

Will the spirit of utopianism, now moribund, be fueled by late-millennial forces in the West? Are we likely to witness the entry on the scene of a new breed of Saint-Simons and Fouriers? The authors of this extraordinarily fine book are doubtful. "It may be," they write,

that somewhere an unnoticed Saint-Simon or a forlorn Fourier is building a new system in solitude, but their voices are drowned by the roar of self-proclaimed ideal societies in operation and the clatter of special effects produced by movie presentations of new worlds in outer space.

Paradoxical though it may seem, this very preoccupation with the future, or rather the pattern of preoccupation, militates against the writing of utopias. The utopian spirit has been largely driven from the contemporary scene by those who have monopolized the future in the name of futurology and its seductive extrapolations of perceived or imagined trends in the present. "The prognosticators, divine or human, inspired or insipid, have a way of leaving out the crucial unknowables, the vital unpredictables, while they befuddle us with inconsequential knowables." Under the blanket of predictions, prophecies, and forecasts which feed on themselves and proliferate even as they equivocate and prevaricate, what the Manuels refer to as "the creative utopian spirit" suffocates.

Not that there is ever any necessarily or exclusively benign consequence of

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the utopian spirit. Far from it. But the Manuels are surely right in their claim that a great many of the vital energies which have gone into the making of Western civilization have been generated in substantial degree by utopianism, direct or indirect. Regardless of occasional pernicious effect, the utopian imagination has been as important to the West as its long-held faith in progress.

Western civilization may not be able to survive long without utopian fantasies any more than individuals can exist without dreaming. . . . To cultivate wisely the ancient art of wishing as an antidote to the present saturation with the pseudoscience of prediction and busyness of masters of applied utopistics may be a paramount moral need of the age. But this is more a utopian wish than a great expectation.

Those are the concluding words of what is without any doubt the finest single historical study of Western utopias to be found anywhere. It is comprehensive, covering the last 2500 years, from early Hebrew and Greek texts, richly detailed, and written with verve and an unerring eye for the illuminating essence of whatever the authors happen to be dealing with. We are given all of the familiar utopias—Plato's *Republic*, More's *Utopia*, Bacon's *New Atlantis*, Fourier's *New Industrial World*, among others—and we are given too an abundance of those less well or generally known: the utopias or utopian ecstasies of Bruno, Andreae, Comenius, Lilburne, Hertzka, and many others. Some are dealt with at length and in penetrating detail; others are given brief exposition. But in none is there lacking evidence of the authors' remarkable range of knowledge—of text, intellectual implication, and milieu.

One of the virtues of the book is the Manuels' willingness to consider minds we don't ordinarily associate with utopianism: for example, Leibniz, Rousseau, and Marx (who with Engels was so withering on the subject of "utopian socialists" as to persuade millions of followers that Marxism is no more utopian than, say, classical physics) and, in our own day, such Pied Pipers as Wilhelm Reich, Herbert Marcuse, and Ernst Bloch. It is this willingness to stretch the concept of utopia beyond a *Republic* or *New Atlantis*, and to go directly to the utopian *mind*, however it may have chosen to reveal itself, that makes this book a treatise in the history of Western thought as well as of the utopian dream. Even so, boundaries, however shadowy, have to be set; one cannot, should not, stretch a concept too far.

We have preferred to steer clear of solipsistic manifestations and continently restrict ourselves to those utopias which have won a measure of public acceptance. . . . When, however, a solipsistic utopia is projected into a social utopia, it falls within the permissible sphere, especially if the creator of the psychic monde idéal *happens to be Jean-Jacques Rousseau.*

It is not simply utopias the authors write about; what they refer to as "constellations" of utopias are the real subject of the book, its "underlying pattern." Thus conventional, linear, event-by-event narrative is happily avoided, its place taken by a more comparative and sociological approach to the history of utopias.

Our task has been to explore the main lines of transmission, without enslavement to a chain of influences, and at the same time to mark and highlight innovations, fractures, and discontinuities, the formation of new clusters, without accepting every self-proclaimed discoverer in utopia at his word.

The utopianism of the ancient world was rarely if ever set in time. Plato was not engaged in prediction when he gave us *The Republic* but instead in discovery, through dialogue, of the ideal, the perfect state. Neither terrestrial nor temporal paradise concerned him; only the abstract, timeless, placeless ideal polity. But a completely new constellation of utopias was made possible by the union in Christianity of the Judaic faith in the millennium and the Greek conception of "an ideal, beautiful city built by men for men without the assistance and often in defiance of the gods." The Manuels correctly link Christian visions of spiritual and social perfection with a philosophy of history, one that is also a compound of Judaic and Hellenic elements. Through Christianity, especially St. Augustine and his *City of God*, what had been in the Greco-Roman world a mere dream of paradise now became the necessary, inexorable consequence of an unfolding epic that God had willed to begin with Adam.

It is important, as the Manuels have seen, to recognize the strikingly human and social terms in which the early Christians expressed their conception of both heaven and, for those who were millenarian, the long millennium preceding final ascent. St. Augustine, beset by the turmoil of the early fifth century in Rome, understandably

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stresses the harmony of social relationships that will prevail in heaven and explains how differences in social status will lead not to envy but to a sense of hierarchical perfection. St. Augustine saw everything, from creation to the final great City of God, within a developmental perspective. Mankind, he tells us at the very end of his classic, has passed through five epochs, is now in its sixth, with a seventh stage (missed by the Manuels!) "our Sabbath," to come, and after it, the eighth and final epoch which will be compounded of love, tranquillity, and harmony, and will of course be everlasting.

More than any other historians I can think of, the Manuels have seen the vital linkage in history between religious preoccupation with terrestrial and temporal paradises down through the early modern era and the rise of the utopian tradition. "When plain belief in religious paradise became attenuated, utopia came into being." Correct. But with utopianism (as the Manuels fully realize), as with a good many other ideas in the modern world, we are obliged to be very careful indeed when we speak of "the secularization of modern thought." The fact is, all major scientists of the 16th and 17th centuries declared their scientific works inspired by religious belief. From among the utopian writers, the Manuels draw the names of Bacon, Campanella, Andreae, Comenius, and Leibniz as representative of the persisting vein of Christian thinking among these moderns. On into the Enlightenment there is a remarkable degree of Christian faith, even among the principals. We may more often than not think of a Voltaire or Condorcet when the age is mentioned, but there were no philosophers more renowned in Enlightenment circles than Lessing, Herder, Kant, and Priestley, and they were devoted to Christian doctrine. In the 19th century those quintessential utopists, Saint-Simon and Comte, continued the faith: Saint-Simon in his New Christianity and Comte in his Religion of Positivism, which someone long ago described as Roman Catholicism minus Christianity. The boundaries of modern secularism are narrower than they were supposed to be only a few decades ago.

The authors' treatment of Sir Thomas More and his classic is masterly and a pure distillation of some of the finest of recent scholarship on this complex mind. The motives behind *Utopia* remain in doubt to this day, for little in More's registered beliefs about property, family, and Roman Catholicism suggests that he agreed with, much less sought to propose for Western adoption, the customs and creeds of the people of Utopia. More, as the Manuels point out, was the author of some devastating indictments of heretics, a profoundly committed Roman Catholic who hated Luther and other reformers, and, when he saw his book being put to revolutionary use by Protestants, was enraged, declaring that he would have not written or else destroyed the book had he been able to foresee that it would someday become a text for heretical revolutionary movements. More, who has achieved sainthood in both the church and in Marxist-Leninist circles (as the "founder" of socialism) was indeed a man for all seasons, some of which are alien to the popular image.

We learn that the 19th-century Fourier, very probably the supreme utopian fantasist of all time, included frequency of sexual intercourse among his researches leading to utopian prescription.

> *From his conversation with men boasting about their conquests, Fourier, not yet equipped with the delicate statistical techniques of contemporary sexologists from Indiana, arrived at the gross estimate that on the average each member of the female sex contracted six liaisons of fornication before marriage and six of adultery after marriage.*

It is hard to think of a single sphere of human life and thought that this extraordinary man, a true believer of infinite degree, left out of his investigations and cogitations while plan-

Elizabeth Bishop, 1911-1979

In Elizabeth Bishop's bizarre, sly, deceptively plainspoken late poem "Crusoe In England," the famous solitary looks back on his life near its end, recalling his isolation and rescue in ways deeper and more unsettling than Defoe could have dreamed. After painting the hallucinatory, vivid island, with hissing vocanoes and hissing giant turtles—an unforgettable terrain—Bishop's Crusoe muses on the dried-out, wan relics of a life. It's tempting, after Elizabeth Bishop's sudden death a few weeks ago, to understand that passage as a master-artist's commentary on the mere furniture of personality and biography—the facts, the manuscripts, the ups and downs of public reputation:

> *The local museum's asked me to*
> *leave everything to them:*
> *the flute, the knife, the shrivelled shoes,*
> *my shedding goatskin trousers*
> *(moths have got in the fur),*
> *the parasol that took me such a time*
> *remembering the way the ribs should go.*
> *It will still work but, folded up,*
> *looks like a plucked and skinny fowl.*
> *How can anyone want such things?*
> *—And Friday, my dear Friday, died of*
> *measles*
> *seventeen years ago come March.*

In the perspective of loss, and actual feeling, artifacts and art can seem withered remnants. In their modesty of outward manner, and their immensely proud awareness of their own power, Bishop's poems always show us, and never tell us, that they are the exception: in her poems, isolation is suspended, as the artifact rises from the dust to unfold its living soul.

She could afford her indifference toward celebrity, and her cool amusement at the literary museum of biography and criticism, because her work was unequaled in its particular intensity. Rereading Bishop's *Complete Poems*, and the more recent *Geography III* (1976), I find the emotional force and penetration of her work amazing. In a way, she had to write *Geography III*, and especially its first two poems ("In the Waiting Room" and "Crusoe in England") in order to teach us readers the full extent to which her poems were not merely what critics and fellow-poets had always called them—"perfect," "crafted," "readable," "exquisite"—but profoundly ambitious as well.

The critical cliché for years was to praise Bishop for her "eye"—a convention she mischievously, perhaps a bit contemptuously, abetted by remarking that her poems were "just description." The purpose of the "eye" and of the description (as "In the Waiting Room" makes explicit) is for Bishop an act of fierce self-definition: she saw the world with such preternatural clarity in order to distinguish herself from it. "You are an *I*," the child in the waiting room realizes, "You are an *Elizabeth*,/ you are one of *them*./ *Why* should you be one, too?" And later, "The War was

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on" does not refer only to the First World War. Crusoe on his island has "nightmares of other islands," a vision of

islands spawning islands,
like frogs' eggs turning into polliwogs
of islands, knowing that I had to live
on each and every one, eventually,
for ages, registering their flora,
their fauna, their geography.

She wrote so well about people and places because she had a powerful motive, embattled; that motive, in nearly all the poems, is to define oneself away from two opposing nightmares: the pain of isolation, and the loss of identity in the mass of the visible world.

In other words, "description" in Bishop is not the notation of pretty or quaint details, but the surest form of knowledge; and knowledge is the geography of survival. Her poems are "just description"—in the same sense that the ocean at the conclusion of her great poem "At the Fishhouses" is just the ocean:

I have seen it over and over, the same sea,
the same,
slightly, indifferently swinging above the
stones,
icily free above the stones,
above the stones, and then the world.
If you should dip your hand in,
your wrist would ache immediately,
your bones would begin to ache and your
hand would burn
as if the water were a transmutation of fire
that feeds on stones and burns with a dark
gray flame.
If you tasted it, it would first taste bitter,
then briny, then surely burn your tongue.
It is like what we imagine knowledge to be:
dark, salt, clear, moving, utterly free,
drawn from the cold hard mouth
of the world, derived from rocky breasts
forever, flowing and drawn, and since
our knowledge is historical, flowing, and
flown.

The grandeur of this vision of knowledge, and the tragic sense of knowledge's limitations, are folded up carefully into the strict discipline of description like the ribs of Crusoe's umbrella. I'll stop for a moment over just one detail: the wit—the *sublime* wit, though it sounds too fancy to say so—of "flowing, and flown" at the end. In a lesser writer, the brilliant stroke that makes two distinct verbs seem like two forms of one verb would be a notable ornament; but in Bishop's line, the wit is made to bear up triumphantly under the pressure of a large intellectual construct—the way wit operates in Shakespeare. It is this kind of thing that led John Ashbery to call Bishop "a writer's writer's writer."

The obituaries for Elizabeth Bishop were not loud or hyperbolic; they were immensely respectful, and perhaps slightly uncomprehending, just like the "local museum" that she drily invented to accept for vague public use the loner Crusoe's chattels. The year 1979 may be remembered for her loss, long after many of the clowns, heroes, and villains of our headlines fade from memory.

Robert Pinsky

ning the perfect society.

The Manuels do well to emphasize the impact that Fourier, Saint-Simon, and other utopists had on the minds of Marx and Engels.

Despite obvious differences, the Marxist slogans can be set into the Fourier-Saint-Simonian chain of filiation without violating their spirit. They are all inhabitants of the same expansive Romantic utopia of self-actualization in varied directions, a boundless drive of the individual and of mankind.

But of course what Marxism was to reach and become in the 20th century was denied Fourier and others: that is, doctrine believed by Marx and Engels to be impeccably scientific which has evolved into a religion that today encompasses or at least governs more than a billion people on earth. The Manuels write that the Marxian writ "will bear the same relationship to communist societies of the future that the Sermon on the Mount does to Christianity." It will indeed and already does. We have no way of knowing how many in communist countries genuinely believe in, are preoccupied by, Marxian text. But then, how many in the Middle Ages genuinely believed in Christian text? All that is important is that intellectual leaders seem to have so believed, or at least built social policy around, Christian creed.

Any book as abundant and diverse in interpretations as this one is bound to strike discord from time to time. I do not find the Manuels' treatment of Rousseau adequate. Their commentary on Rousseau's *moi* and *moi commun*—the first being man's inherited self, locked into place by a social order that is no more than a moral desert; the second the kind of self that will exist in a *monde idéal*—is excellent as far as it goes. But the Manuels (like so many other students these days of Rousseau) make the mistake that Rousseau never made: consideration of the *moi commun* without reference to the sheer *power* that would in Rousseau's mind be necessary to achievement of this new self. In the extraordinary third discourse, on political economy, in the *Social Contract* (only see the third paragraph of the chapter "The Legislator"), in *Emile*, and in the *Nouvelle Héloïse* Rousseau makes evident that the liberation of the human being from *amour de soi*, love of self, so profusely generated in current society, can only be accomplished through the power—enlightened, yes, but unremitting and absolute—that is presented in the lofty and impersonal General Will in his political writings and in the highly personal but no less absolute forms of the tutor (Rousseau) in *Emile* and of Wolmar in the *Nouvelle Héloïse*. And so far as what the Manuels refer to as Rousseau's "strictures against revolution" (which he did indeed utter), it is well to remember that toward the end of the discourse on inequality he complains that from the time the political state came into existence "it was continually being patched up when the first task should have been to get the site cleared." Those are words for all barricades! And, to refer once more to "The Legislator" in the *Social Contract*, there is no passage in Marx, Lenin, or Mao that is more revolutionary in bent than its third paragraph.

The Manuels must also be faulted, I believe, in their summary of Darwin's position and influence. It is incomplete, to say the least, to characterize Darwin as "anything but a jolly utopian" and to refer to "the black mood generated by his theory." In both *The Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man* Darwin displays a solidly progressivist mentality. In the former he refers on many occasions to improvement of all beings, man included, as the consequence of natural selection. Thus: "Hence we may look with some confidence to a secure future of great length. And as natural selection works solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental endowments will tend to progress towards perfection." And gazing upon the very final sentence of *The Origin of Species* one is led to wonder whether a more

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eloquent affirmation of earthly progress has ever been written. In *The Descent of Man* Darwin refers to "the wonderful progress of the United States" and immediately accounts for it through his theory of natural selection. And further on, "It is apparently a truer and more cheerful view that progress has been more general than retrogression; that man has risen . . . from a lowly condition to the highest standard as yet attained by him in knowledge, morals, and religion." Granted that Darwin underwent a certain mental depression in his last years, the cause could hardly have been reflection upon his theory. (More probably, reflections upon its defects, as then stated.)

But I must not conclude on notes of disagreement. What is of overriding and overwhelming importance is that the Manuels have given us a book of impressive learning, immense range of ideas and personages, written in a style often brilliant and never less than graceful, and filled with more wit than one usually finds in a half a hundred works of scholarship. I repeat: it is by far the best and the grandest of histories of the utopian mind.

Robert Nisbet

Robert Nisbet is Albert Schweitzer Professor Emeritus at Columbia University and currently resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Study. His *History of the Idea of Progress* will be published by Basic Books next January.

Testimony: The Memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich as related to and edited by Solomon Volkov

(Harper & Row; $15)

During his lifetime, Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-75) was not only the Soviet Union's greatest composer and one of the preeminent figures in 20th-century music: he was a showpiece of the Communist party. His Seventh ("Leningrad") Symphony, composed during the German bombardment of Leningrad in 1941, became a Soviet battle hymn, a symbol of national courage. Although severely rebuked several times for composing dissonant—so-called "decadent"—music, Shostakovich each time recanted. He went on to win a string of Soviet honors, including several Stalin Prizes. He represented Stalin at a Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace in New York in 1949; he read statements at home and abroad that lauded the party. Frail and ill at ease in public, Shostakovich nonetheless seemed the perfect Comrade Composer. "The official mask sat tight on his face," writes Solomon Volkov in his preface to Shostakovich's memoirs. "We were all convinced that this situation was satisfactory to him."

That seeming complacency makes *Testimony* all the more shocking. In the last four years of his life the composer let his official mask slip. Perhaps in an effort to justify his official role—or perhaps to answer émigrés' charges that no great artist could remain in Russia—he decided to dictate his memoirs to musicologist Volkov. Volkov had them smuggled out of the country and then emigrated, not long afterward, to the US. Rambling and disjointed, *Testimony* is nevertheless one of the most powerful political indictments of the Stalinist era to come along in years—as savage as Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago* or Nadezhda Mandelstam's *Hope Against Hope*, a memoir by the widow of the poet Osip Mandelstam. Here is no engaging account of a composer's life and music.

"Looking back, I see nothing but ruins, only mountains of corpses," Shostakovich begins. His recollections often read like a litany of the lost. One friend after another disappeared into the Gulag, and the family and friends left behind hurried to destroy any reminder of them. "The director was arrested but the work went on as though nothing had happened," recalls Shostakovich about the arrest of his friend Vsevolod Meyerhold, an influential theater director. "This was one of the terrible signs of the age, a man had disappeared but everyone pretended that nothing had happened."

As portrayed here, Stalinist Russia is the irrational world of Gogol turned terrifyingly sinister. Edicts are a marvel of stupidity. Communist bureaucrats are so ignorant that a minister of culture orders up a "quartet of 10 men." Stalin himself appears as a half-mad "beast and butcher." Shostakovich often satirizes Stalin's petty jealousy and overweening ego. "The atmosphere was appropriate to a sacred rite," he says caustically of one meeting of composers with Stalin. "It seemed that a miracle was about to occur—for instance, Stalin would give birth." Stalin's whims were often deadly. In the mid-1930s, all of the Ukrainian folk singers, wandering minstrels who by tradition were blind, were invited to a folk singers' congress—and shot. "You can't hand a blind man a corrected and approved text and you can't write him an order either," says Shostakovich bitterly. "It was easier to shoot them. And so they did."

For Shostakovich, the Stalinist terror was a bitter disillusionment. The 1920s had seen a burgeoning of avant-garde art in Russia: painters like Goncharova and Malevich, and writers like Mayakovsky and Mandelstam flourished. Music took an experimental leap. Shostakovich early established his own strongly colored musical voice, in which he combined unconventional harmonies and unexpected march rhythms with dance-like sections reminiscent of Mahler. His *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, a brash early work full of forceful dissonances, was performed successfully for two years. The composer spoke proudly of himself as a "revolutionist" and characterized his music as an expression of the Russian people.

But then, in 1936, came Stalin's famous attack on *Lady Macbeth* as "muddle instead of music." The party began its relentless purge of modernist art. Shostakovich became an "enemy of the people," fearful not for his music but for his life. Although he publicly recanted in 1936 (and again in 1948, when he, Khachaturian, and Prokofiev were branded "formalists"), the composer never recovered from the blows—or from his fear. "You can go mad with fear," he says. "I know about that."

Shostakovich retreated into his music, where it was difficult for the censors to spot his outrage. Nonetheless, he was attacked on and off throughout his life. His playful Ninth Symphony, which Stalin had hoped would be an apotheosis of himself, was judged ideologically weak. One official critic accused him of "not overcoming in himself the ironic

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drawing of Shostakovich by David Schorr

skeptic." His Thirteenth Symphony was publicly banned by the anti-Semitic authorities after its premiere. It included a musical setting of Yevtushenko's "Babi Yar," a poem about the mass murder of Jews. "Jews became a symbol for me," says Shostakovich. "All of man's defenselessness was concentrated in them." He was denounced for the despair that clearly sounds in his penultimate Fourteenth Symphony. Such pessimism was considered inimical to the grand communist future. "That's where titles like 'An Optimistic Tragedy' come from,'" he scoffs. There were periods when he was incapable of composing at all: "Critics counted what percentage of my symphonies was in a major key and what percentage in a minor key. That oppressed me; it deprived me of the will to compose."

While government officials could not completely control the content of Shostakovich's music, they were careful to interpret it along solid party lines. As the composer reveals here, however, his symphonies are far from the glorifications of communism that the world heretofore accepted. His mammoth Seventh Symphony, with its crashing crescendos, is not about the German advance but "about the Leningrad that Stalin destroyed and that Hitler merely finished off." The Fifth Symphony, Shostakovich's greatest work (which was composed and performed in 1937, at the height of the mass terror under Stalin) is a requiem for the dead. "I had to describe the horrible extermination machine and express protest against it," he says.

As social history, *Testimony* affords an excellent account of artistic life in Russia during the first decades of the 20th century. The happiest moments in the book are when Shostakovich reminisces about his friends and idols: Borodin, Meyerhold, Glazunov. Glazunov, for instance, appears as a brilliant but eccentric bear of a man. Immensely overweight, he surreptitiously sipped vodka while teaching Shostakovich's chamber music class and kept a cigar firmly clenched in his right hand even while playing rapid runs on the piano. But the prevailing mood is as bleak as the Siberian landscape. Although Shostakovich may have slightly recast his life with a view to posterity ("I wrote everything but denunciations," he claims), his corrosive statements attest to his suffering. "You have to treat everything with irony, especially the things you hold dear," he says at one point. "There's more of a chance then that they'll survive."

Ultimately, what *Testimony* raises are the agonizing moral questions that face all Russian artists. Is the only honorable course in the Soviet Union that of being a martyr, of openly denouncing the government? Or is it justifiable to make some compromises in order to remain in Russia and continue to work within its great artistic tradition? The same questions haunt Solzhenitsyn's early works. In *Cancer Ward*, for example, he couches the dilemma in terms of two prisoners. One, after openly rebelling, spent his life in labor camps; the other spent his days trying to compromise. "I'll tell you something," says Shulubin, the compromiser. "You haven't had to do much lying, do you understand? At least you haven't had to stoop so low. . . ." Like Shulubin (and most men), Shostakovich never found the strength to declare himself openly: that compromise embittered his life. The Soviet Union tried to suppress publication of this grim book in the West. It is easy to understand why.

Annalyn Swan

Annalyn Swan is a staff writer at *Time* magazine.

Brief Reviews

Triple
by Ken Follett

(Arbor House; $10.95)

There are no secrets and few surprises in *Triple*, but Ken Follett knows other ways to keep tension high in his thrillers. Follett has taken one convention of the spy-novel—spy accomplishes dangerous mission, barely avoiding treacherous counter-agents—and turned it inside-out once again. In *The Eye of the Needle*, the protagonist is a World

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War II German spy who we hope will be caught. In *Triple*, Israeli agent Nat Dickstein is the hero, but one whose identity is uncovered, whose plans are guessed, and whose every move is traced by Russian and Egyptian spies.

So the tension in this well-constructed thriller stems solely from Nat keeping one step ahead of his opponents. His mission includes several topics of current interest, and is complicated enough to keep one wondering how it ever could be concluded successfully: so that Israel can construct nuclear weapons, Nat must steal a boatload of uranium without anyone detecting the theft. How he manages this (all the time wishing he were back on his kibbutz growing grapes—no appealing spy hero enjoys his job), and how the Russian and Egyptian agents follow him and try to stop him, make for all-in-one-sitting reading. And the technical and political details, plus the requisite romance and sex scenes, fill out the book nicely, without the padding that clouded *The Eye of the Needle*.

My only objection to *Triple* as a novel of suspense lies with the publisher. Apparently this book was rushed into print to take advantage of the popularity of the paperback edition of *The Eye of the Needle*—at least that's the only reason I can see for the repeated sentences and paragraphs, as well as for the many misspellings left in the published book. This lapse of standards mars a book that otherwise keeps the reader's mind at work and stomach tight with tension.

Lisa Derman

Familiar Territory: Observations on American Life by Joseph Epstein

(Oxford University Press; $11.95)

Joseph Epstein is a leading American practitioner of the vanishing craft of the familiar essay—a genre best defined by Klee's explanation of *his* art: "I take a line out for a walk."

But the metaphor need not be taken literally. Essay writers are known for their sedentary habits, and it should come as no surprise that Epstein reserves his sharpest invective for joggers: ". . . it is the virtuousness of runners that appalls." I myself have always imagined the great William Hazlitt descanting on life and letters from a fine leather armchair and with a bottle of good port within reach. The inimitable Max Beerbohm ever appears to me as holding court at high tea, and G. K. Chesterton's wit must have been its deadliest when challenged by debating partners around a well-supplied dinner table.

Epstein, a professor at Northwestern University, fell into the habit of writing a column of "opinions, speculations, or oddly angled views" after his appointment, in 1974, as editor of the *American Scholar*, the journal of Phi Beta Kappa. Gathered in this slim volume, his columns reveal a man of exemplary sobriety, understated scholarship, and balanced judgment. Reading his commentary on what he calls "the everyday flow of things," I hear the clatter of coffee mugs. His is an easygoing, neighborly tone—a Sunday afternoon's genial conversation over pecan pie or cheesecake about the changing mores of greetings, the blight of Boutique America (he refrains from nostalgia), the de Tocqueville Impulse (of defining America), and the Sin of Wasting Time (of watching television).

Unlike his British colleagues and his American mentors, H. L. Mencken and

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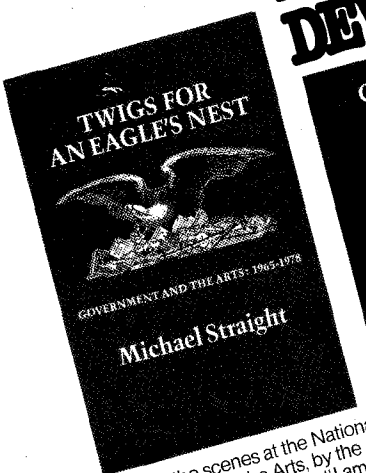

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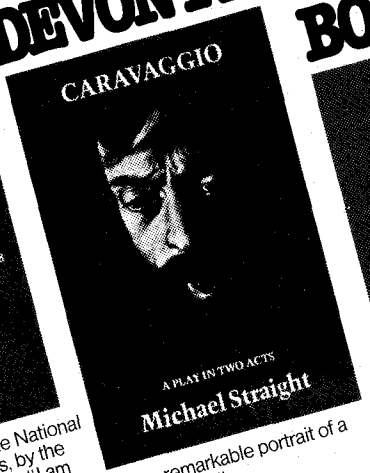

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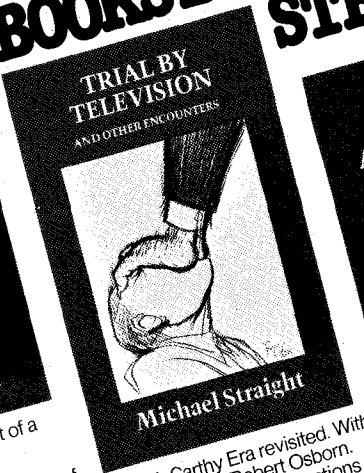

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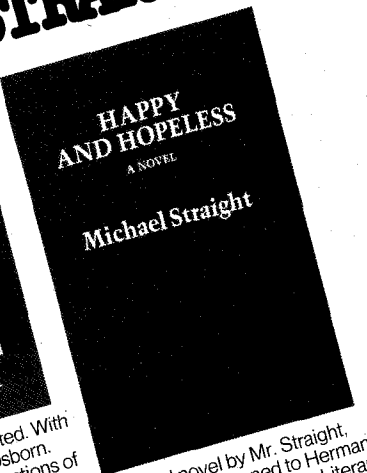

The third novel by Mr. Straight, who has been likened to Herman Melville by London Times Literary Supplement. His previous novels were considered classics by Time and Newsweek. 124 pp., $4.95

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A. J. Liebling, Epstein gives equal time to opponents as well as to self-doubt; he avoids self-righteousness and represses insults. He raises his voice rarely, and when one least expects it. For example, he captures Walter Cronkite as "an instance of absolute fluency in the service of complete mindlessness, but then he has a face that only a nation could love." He first compares Harrison Salisbury to Muzak, and then suggests that "when he describes a landscape one expects to be shown a color-slide."

Epstein does not seem to urge any social action, and he can be equally charged with being a liberal or a conservative. One expects readers to strike back at him with the question: "So what's your point?" Or: "But where do you really stand?"

These are times that call for tracts rather than essays—purposeful jogging rather than a stroll. Epstein and his fellow essay writers are elegantly out of fashion.

Charles Fenyvesi

Charles Fenyvesi's book, *Splendor in Exile*, is being published this month by New Republic Books.

LUCKIES

The loop of rusty cable incises
its shadow on the stucco wall.
My father smiles shyly and takes
one of my cigarettes, holding it

awkwardly at first, as if it were
a dart, while the yard slowly
swings across the wide sill of daylight.
Then it is a young man's quick hand

that rises to his lips, he leans against the wall,
his white shirt open at the throat,
where the skin is weathered, and he chats
and daydreams, something he never does.

Smoking his cigarette, he is even
younger than I am, a brother who
begins to guess, amazed, that what
he will do will turn out to be this.

He recalls the house he had
when I was born, leaning against it
now after work, the pale stucco
of memory, 1947.

Baby bottles stand near the sink inside.
The new wire of the telephone, dozing
in a coil, waits for the first call.
The years are smoke.

Reginald Gibbons

Kauffmann, *from page 24*

be taken seriously as representations of American life. They were not expected to be any truer than TV commercials are expected to be today; like TV commercials, their validity was in their mimesis of collective fantasy rather than in their correspondence to daily life.

But for the last 10 years or so, many American films have tried—with widely varying success—to understand, represent, and illuminate American experience, as is. Such directors as Ritt, Lumet, Rafelson, Loden, May, Weill, and one must in honesty include Altman, have tried to help create a tradition in America out of work that had previously been only sporadic: a tradition of personal, directly responsive, truth-seeking film. This *has* been a tradition in many other countries, where it has always been dwarfed by the majority of films but where it has survived. For 10 years America at last seemed to be catching up, trying amidst the generally undiminished flow of entertainment films to create and sustain this smaller, vital line.

Lately there has been an outbreak of films that seem at first to be in the "new" line but are deliberately buffeted by falsehood and trick into the majority. Is this a coincidence or a change? If the former, no comment is needed. If the latter, one can at least speculate. This revived artificiality may be connected to the elephantine swell in filmmaking costs, may be a fear of anything that doesn't aim for the middle; but if that's true, it's also connected to something else. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, one felt a desperation in producers and film financiers. Production wasn't cheap then, but it was lower than it is now, and in trying to get a fix on a changing audience, the money men were willing to try anything, even seriously intended films. The audience was changing then because everything was in flux, disconcerted primarily (but not only) by Vietnam.

Now everything is much more settled, especially with young people. (What do discos mean? Even rising young lawyers go to discos and smoke pot.) The film producers look out and see a country relatively stable as against 10 years ago—at the moment, anyway. They see a country sitting like a giant trained dog while TV pours into its gaping mouth the deliberate and desired distortions of its dramas, its commercials, and, to some extent, its news. (Did you hear Bob Hope gabbing blithely about "the Gang of Four" in his show from China? Perhaps that was the admission price that the Chinese charged.) So the film producers may have begun to ask themselves why they should risk doing anything other than the same.

Robert Shaw died in August 1978. His final film was *Avalanche Express*, a political thriller that doesn't fit the above category because it never pretends to truth. (The script, adapted from a novel, is by Abraham Polonsky, highly regarded by some but to me a Hollywood script manufacturer who varnishes his merchandise with seriousness.) Shaw plays a top Soviet general who defects for humanitarian reasons, and, in a few scattered moments, we glimpse the

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ninous caverns of power that lay deep him.

Shaw had been, might have been ;ain, an actor of consequence on stage id on screen. See him in *The Caretaker, ie Hireling, A Man for All Seasons.* In cent years he had been riding the olden toboggan—*Jaws, Black Sunday,* and on. When I saw this final film, I ought of him as a writer.

He had written novels and plays. His ovel *The Man in the Glass Booth* (which I viewed in TNR, February 4, 1967) is an genious and moving political thriller, uch better than the play and film made f it, and a cosmos or two above *valanche Express.* Shaw told me once in n interview on PBS that one of his easons for writing was so that, when he as rehearsing on a stage or a studio oor and the director yelled an order at im out of the black, he could think to imself, "All right, I'll do it, you bloody an, but I've written a book. Have you?" hen I saw *Avalanche Express,* I hoped at he had kept on writing.

orrespondence, *from page 7*

ame person.

The search for good and bad hinders rowth, ontogenetically and phyloge- etically. Irrationality, not malevolence, the great threat to civilization. Han- ah Arendt exquisitely perceived the anality of evil that has to prevail in a to- alitarian state. Evil is an equally banal oncept when applied to the mind and haracter of an individual whose actions re controlled unconsciously. It is more nportant to remember that Hitler was ad than that he was bad.

It's rather interesting that Dr. rauthammer, in his effort to prevent sychology from being "anointed queen f the sciences," exemplifies its misuse y referring to the likes of Howard osell (who, by the way, despite his randiosity, does connect to the motional pulse of an event, and does ecognize that the external event is a

Correction

Due to a typographical error, a phrase in Geoffrey Barraclough's review of *Aspects of Development and Underdevelopment* and *Progress for a Small Planet* was changed in meaning. The penultimate sentence in the review should read: ". . . the New International Order may cease to be a dream and become a reality."

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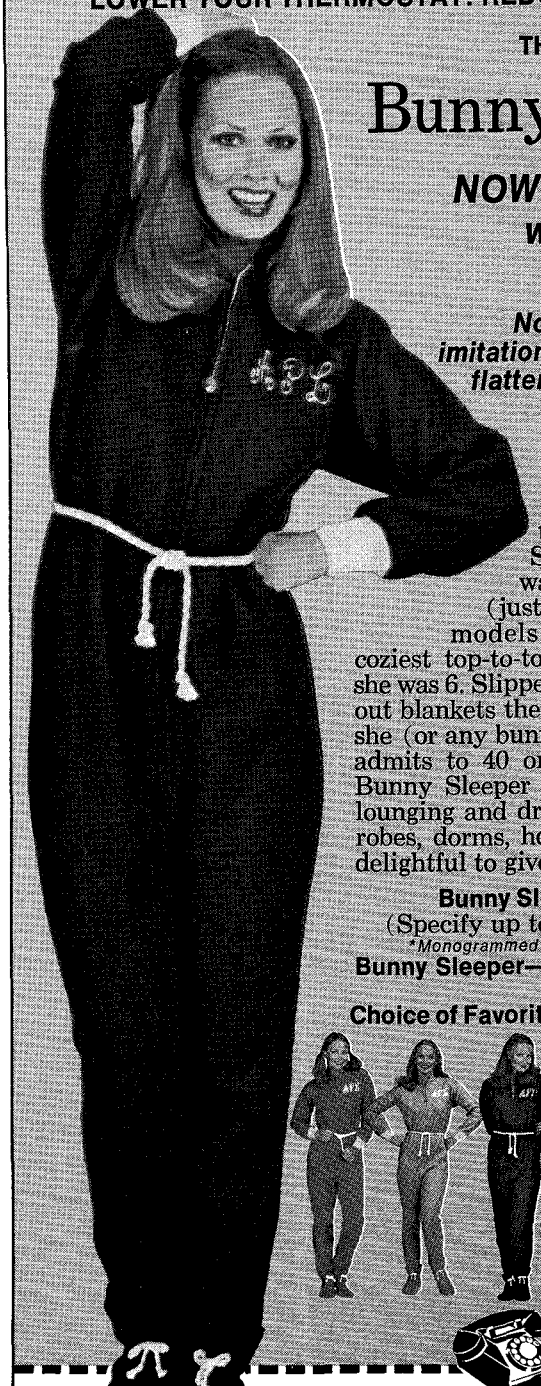

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representation of an internal force) and mentions no psychologist or psychoanalyst as an abuser. It could well be because psychoanalytic thought is so very recessed from public view, and in no danger at all of suffering from overuse. Perhaps we would have been less disappointed with President Carter if, before his election, a psychoanalytic voice had given attention to the unconscious phenomena operating in a mind that saw itself as "born again," virtuous as such a rebirth might be (yes, a cheap shot, but I did have the thought with foresight as well as hindsight.) Significantly, in this very publication, John Osborne did have the courage to ask just what it is our president has been saved from.

Ira Landess
New York, New York

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THE NEW REPUBLIC MAGAZINE

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Washington Diarist

Work and Play

In Washington one way to impress your friends is to leave a Sunday brunch and head purposefully for the office, or to arrive at a Saturday dinner drooping from a day's work. It doesn't take long to catch onto a basic assumption in this city: if you feel stress in your job you're on the road to realizing your ambitions and securing self-esteem (and esteem in the eyes of others, of course). I imagine stress is taken as a good omen by over-achievers everywhere, not just in DC. (Isn't a doctor's emergency beeper, which keeps him always on his toes, his badge of prestige?) Such hard-driving self-importance stands out as one of the less attractive features of life among status-conscious elites in Washington and elsewhere. But I suspect that something in this attitude is familiar to people in most jobs—work is not supposed to be just fun and relaxation. As Tom Sawyer figured out, "Work consists of whatever a body is *obliged* to do, and Play consists of whatever a body is not obliged to do."

This cheerless assumption about work, however, is not shared by certain social psychologists, whose job (and therefore joy?) it is to survey attitudes in the work place. They presume that work is supposed to be more or less pleasant, and that stress is among the leading causes of dissatisfaction at work and therefore an evil to be eliminated. But interviews with employees don't confirm this therapeutic view. Workers complain about many things at work, but stress is not high on their list of gripes. Most say that they feel tension of one form or another, but that it is not their main source of discontent. Insofar as such surveys can be taken to show anything, these findings support my moralistic mullings. All workers may not thrive on stress, as some driven souls do, but they don't complain about it because they *expect* work to be a source of pressure, not pleasure. This is not just masochism; it's part of a dynamic of hedonism, which is summed up in the ad slogan, "Now comes Miller time." Most of us have figured out that you can't come home and unwind if you haven't been at least little tense during the day.

Finding satisfactory ways to relax doesn't seem to be as quick and easy as it once was; that is apparently true even among those who don't have the opportunity to cultivate refined tastes in leisure activities. One surprising fact I came across is that farmers ranked meditation second among "preferred palliatives." It looks as if trends in the culture of leisure—like trends in most of the creature comforts these days—are being led by those loosely known as young professionals. In Washington DC, yoga is the thing to do (according to the "Style Plus" section of the *Washington Post*). A few of us at *TNR* have been indulging, a little sheepishly, in the joys of touching our ears with our toes, but if the *Post* article is any guide, we've been going to the wrong class. We've been missing the one with the "Beautiful People" in it. What could be more soothing than to see BPs cut down to size by their teacher, who is reported to be unintimidated by her prestigious students? Which disciple, I wonder, would answer to the teacher's deflating appellation, "You with the fat popo"?

Newspaper readers are sick and tired of the hard work that newspapers demand of them: that's the word from the Newspaper Readership Project report commissioned by the American Society of Newspaper Editors and conducted by the market research firm of Yankelovich, Skelly & White. Newspaper readers used to be earnest, industrious citizens eager to improve themselves and enlarge their vision of the world. No more, it seems. "The demand is for more help in handling emotional problems, understanding others, feeling good and eating well, having fun, and in general fulfilling oneself"—in short, "everything that serves the 'Me' generation," the market researchers cheerfully report. That sounds like quite a bargain, and completely unlike a newspaper. The report also announces that readers would like editors and reporters to write about themselves, to become warm personalities instead of mere bylines. Writing snatches of autobiography might strike a journalist as a diverting break from a beat—for a while. (James J. Kilpatrick took the report's advice and whipped up a quick *Bildungsroman* in a column not long ago, and happily received one of the biggest batches of letters he has ever gotten, some sharing life stories.) But this "direct, person-to-person relationship with their newspapers" that readers say they want sounds to me more like an inky mess than healthy entertainment.

Apparently the public is also maki new demands on the public libra system. On the crest of what may be t wave of the future, the Baltimo County Public Library system is setti up "mini-libraries" in shopping mal These libraries are not quiet or comfo table, they have no card catalogs, a very few classics. Instead, the mir libraries provide piles of best selle dozens of copies of the hottest titles, that no readers will go away empt handed when they drop in during shopping expedition. The theory is th since the public pays for the libraries, should get what it wants, not what son didactic librarian thinks it should wan To assure the public the best return f its money, the mini-library staff wee out any books that don't circula enough—no matter how classic the are. This seems to me to miss the poi of libraries. You don't go to the libary borrow books—especially popul paperbacks you can buy, often in t color of your choice, at a nearby stor And if you like more obscure har covers, you go fully expecting n to find them on the shelves. I go b cause libraries—whether new a fluorescently lit or old and cozy—insti an anachronistic feeling of civic virtu What else does? Libraries are th remnants of the public associations th once edified a sparsely populate America. Ben Franklin, among who countless civic ventures was the found ing of the first circulating library 1731, speaks with pride in h autobiography of the institution h fathered: "These libraries have im proved the general conversation of th Americans, made the commo tradesmen and farmers as intellectual a most gentlemen from other countrie and perhaps have contributed in som degree to the stand so generally mad throughout the colonies in defence c their privileges." His autobiograph wouldn't last a minute in a mini-library but the spirit of modest improvement h encouraged lingers in traditional librar branches. It's there that citizens ca enjoy the rare pleasure of silen sociability with people they'd neve invite over, find something out that the didn't know before, and leave feelin refreshed in an unusual stodgy way.

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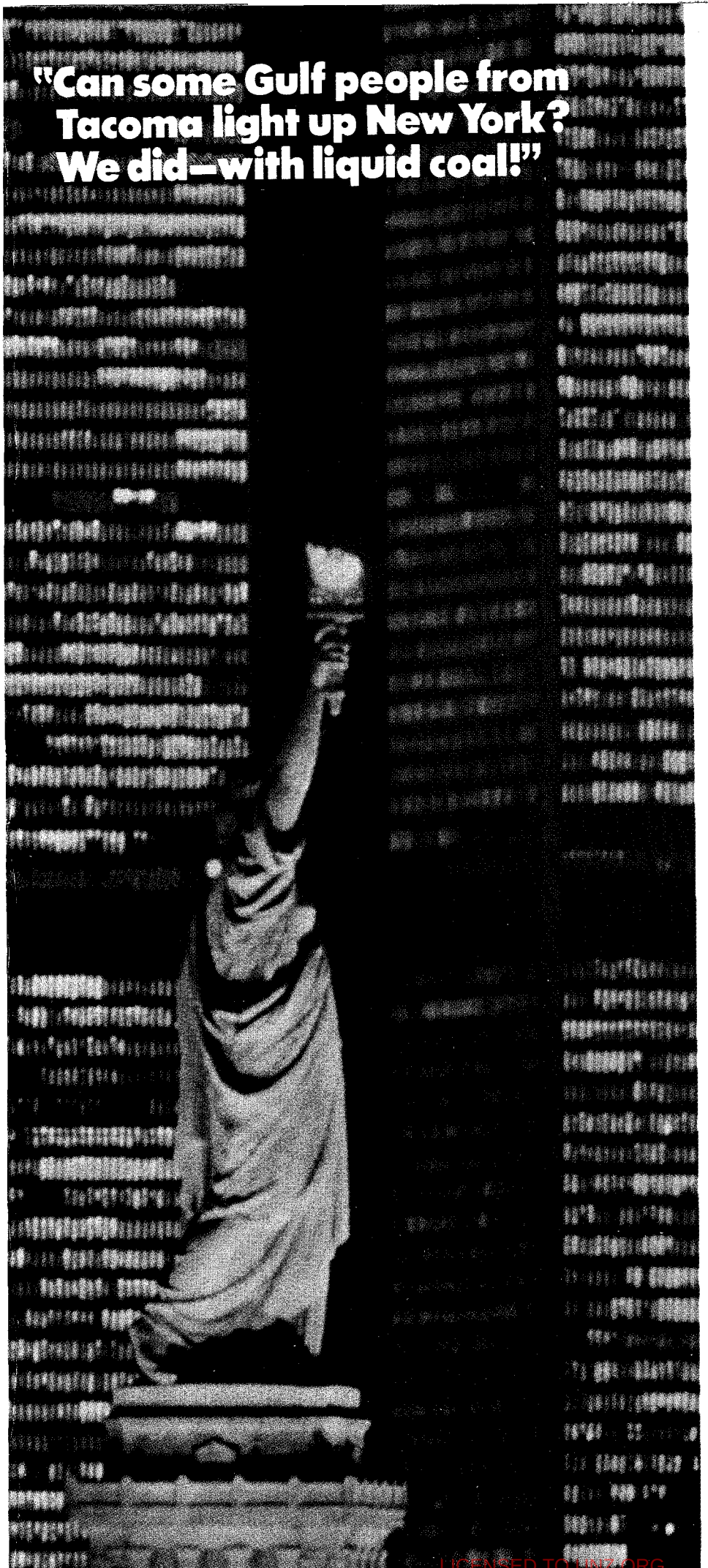
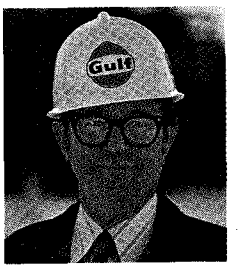


"Can some Gulf people from Tacoma light up New York? We did—with liquid coal!"

"It happened last October," says Gulf Plant Manager J.K. Ward. "During a week of tests, the solvent-refined coal that we made in Tacoma, Washington, helped light up Manhattan.



"It's a lot easier and cheaper to transport liquid coal than the solid, lumpy kind."

"Of course, scores of Gulf people helped create and develop SRCII (that means solvent-refined coal) and the processes we use to make it.

"We're all enthusiastic about the test. SRCII did all we expected. It looks like oil. It pumps like oil. Best of all, it burns as clean as high-grade fuel oil: emissions were well under the new EPA standards. But it's coal, liquefied and with almost all the pollutants left out.

"SRCII is still experimental. Gulf and the U.S. Department of Energy are working on it together to develop a practical alternative to imported crude oil.

"But we know how to make it on a small scale; we know it will burn well. The next step is to find out if SRCII can be produced in large quantities, and produced economically. If this can be done, then liquid coal could be used instead of precious petroleum by utilities, industry and consumers, reducing America's reliance on imported crude oil.

"We've got a few centuries' supply of coal here in the U.S. Someday, instead of helping light up New York, we may be lighting up many of the cities on the East Coast.

"Responsible energy management is a big challenge. Clean-burning liquid coal is one of the ways Gulf is meeting that challenge."

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